



DISCUSSION DOCUMENTS AND POSITION PAPERS

14th National Congress

10-15 July 2017



**Defend, Advance, Deepen the National Democratic Revolution:
The Vanguard Role of the SACP**



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1

GOING TO THE ROOT

A radical second phase of the National Democratic Revolution – its context, content, and our strategic tasks

(“To be radical is to grasp the root of the matter.” – Karl Marx, Dec 1843-Jan 1844;

A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right:

Introduction (Emphasis added))

SA’s triple crisis - the immediate context of the call for a second radical phase of the NDR

Two decades beyond the critical 1994 democratic breakthrough our society remains afflicted with crisis levels of unemployment, inequality and poverty. This triple crisis has some cyclical features, reflecting the impact, for instance, of the 2008 global crisis on our own economy. But even during periods of relatively strong domestic growth in the late 1990s and early 2000s, crisis levels of unemployment, inequality and poverty persisted. Our core social and economic challenges are clearly deep-rooted and systemic - rather than the result of a temporary downturn. This means that our response cannot just be a question of waiting for, or seeking to stimulate an upturn in growth along the same path-dependent direction as in the past.

It was in this context that the necessity for a radical second phase of the NDR was debated and endorsed at the ANC’s National Policy Conference (June 2012) and formally adopted at the ANC’s Mangaung 53rd National Conference (December 2012). The resolutions of the Alliance Summit sought to give further content to the concept. The call for a second radical phase was also the overarching theme of President Zuma’s 2014 inauguration speech.

The triple crisis is reflected in rising popular discontent, a growing sense of alienation, frustration and sometimes despair amongst significant strata of the youth, the unemployed, the working poor, those in informal settlements, and the so-called “black middle class” (most of whom are working class professionals or self-employed and often struggling petty entrepreneurs). In short, the triple crisis is being felt acutely across a broad spectrum of the waged and unwaged popular strata. The unprecedented numbers of so-called “township service delivery protests”, and the lengthy and violent platinum belt strike are further symptoms of the impact of this crisis. Notwithstanding the ANC’s impressive May 2014 electoral majority, it is critical that we recognise there is a popular, but for the moment largely amorphous, groundswell of frustration - much of it currently beyond the reach of the ANC-alliance’s organisational and ideological influence.

This is the immediate context of the call for a second radical phase of the NDR as a programme that strategically combines state power and popular activism. But this call (this “narrative” about the way forward) is not the only “narrative” competing for hegemony in the current reality. Indeed, the perspective of a second radical phase of the NDR remains undeveloped. It is often poorly or

confusingly explained, and other competing perspectives often enjoy greater prominence in the media and broader public domain.

This present intervention seeks to contribute to a collective discussion on the meaning, content and context of a second radical phase of the NDR.

Why do we speak of a **SECOND** radical phase of the NDR?

The ANC National Policy Conference correctly clarified that we are **not** speaking about a second “stage”. Implicit in this clarification is the recognition that we are not advocating a break with the current constitutional dispensation (or with a supposedly “illegitimate government” requiring regime change) – of the kind that the EFF and others appear to be flirting with. But nor are we advocating for a back to business as usual. Rather, we are underlining the imperative of a new **phase** in an ongoing national democratic transition.

This means that, if we are to give content and context to a second phase, we need also to characterise the main content and limitations of the first phase.

So what was the first phase of the NDR?

The first phase was essentially played out on the political and juridical terrain. It had as its critical moments:

- the 1991-1994 multi-party negotiations that finally compelled agreement (largely forced through mass mobilisation) that a future constitution could only be drawn up by a **democratically elected** Constituent Assembly;
- the **1994 democratic electoral breakthrough** itself; and
- the consequent **1996 adoption of a new constitution**.

These processes were then consolidated in a wide-range of laws, democratic institutions, and the de-racialisation of the administrative apparatus of the state. It is important to assert that the **first phase was itself radical. It abolished (politically, juridically, constitutionally) white minority rule.**

Thanks to the active role that the organized working class had played in the defeat of the apartheid regime, there were many important legislative and institutional gains made by the working class after 1994. The explicit entrenchment of worker rights in the Constitution, a range of progressive labour laws including the Labour Relations Act and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, and the institutionalization of NEDLAC.

The first phase has also been the platform on which a massive socio-economic **REDISTRIBUTIVE** programme has been launched

*Over the past 20 years, the democratic breakthrough of the mid-1990s has been used by four successive ANC-led administrations to drive major **REDISTRIBUTIVE** socio-economic programmes. Among the notable achievements have been:*

- More than 16 million (nearly one-third of all South Africans) are now benefiting from a range of social grants – up from 3 million in 1994;
- Over 7 million new household electricity connections have been made since 1996. (To put this achievement into context - in the preceding century, successive white minority regimes only electrified 5 million households!);
- Over 3,3 million free houses have been built, benefiting more than 16 million people;

- More than 1,4 million students have benefited from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme;
- Over 9 million learners in 20,000 schools receive daily meals.
- Over 400,000 solar water heaters have been installed free on the rooftops of poor households in the past 5 years – one of the largest such programmes in the world.

There are many other major **redistributive** achievements in sanitation and water connections, in adult basic education, in Grade R school enrolment, in rolling out retro-virals, and much more.

These are all part of the “good news story” that the ANC alliance in the last elections quite correctly campaigned upon. These real achievements are certainly the most important factor in the continued overwhelming majority electoral support achieved by our movement.

Of course, since we are dealing with a real life process and not an abstract theory, this massive redistributive process underway since 1994 has often been uneven. Targets have often not been met; the quality of “delivery” has sometimes been poor; maintenance of new infrastructure often gets neglected. There have been challenges of corruption, some of them serious. What is more, in the face of poverty, unemployment and inequality the redistributive process is never enough and is often overwhelmed by the scale of the challenges. Housing backlogs seem to grow as fast as we build new RDP houses – partly because new housing projects act as magnets to draw ever more people from outlying informal settlements and rural poverty into areas of development.

The anti-majoritarian liberals, opposition parties, the commercial media dwell incessantly on all of these problems. Their strategic objective is to sow popular demoralization and a lack of belief in the capacity of popular forces and the democratic state to advance development. In the face of this ongoing offensive, it is important that we do not become overly defensive or in denial about the many challenges. In particular, we need to deal decisively with corruption and incompetence.

But even more importantly we must not allow this offensive to distract us from getting to the root of the matter: Why, despite a massive redistributive programme over the past 20 years, are crisis levels of unemployment, poverty and inequality still being reproduced?

To answer this question is also to answer our main question: What do we mean by (and why do we need) a second radical phase of the NDR?

*The main thesis of this intervention is that, with all of its achievements, **the key limitation since 1994 has been two-fold:***

1. **There has been socio-economic RE-DISTRIBUTION but insufficient STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION particularly of the systemic features of our PRODUCTIVE economy**
2. **This redistributive effort has been almost entirely conceptualized as a TOP-DOWN STATE “DELIVERY” PROCESS**

Redistribution – but insufficient structural transformation

Over the past 20 years our major emphasis on the socio-economic front has been on REDISTRIBUTION. Redistribution is, and must continue to be, a key pillar of our NDR. BUT THE EMPHASIS ON REDISTRIBUTION HAS TENDED TO NEGLECT THE CRITICAL TASK OF TRANSFORMING the systemic features of SA's PRODUCTIVE ECONOMY. We have tried – and not without important successes – to redistribute surplus (largely through the fiscus). But these fiscal resources are derived from a portion of the surplus produced by an untransformed productive economy that is locked into a highly problematic growth-path trajectory. It is precisely this untransformed productive economy that is the prime factor in

reproducing the often deepening levels of unemployment, poverty and inequality that valiant efforts at redistribution seek to address. Moreover, some of the redistribution has tended to actively strengthen incumbent private monopoly capital.

BEE – giving a democratic government a foothold in business, or business a foothold in government?

Black Economic Empowerment measures have also largely been of a REDISTRIBUTIVE nature – apportioning encumbered shares to aspirant black capitalists, usually with political connections. While the complexion of the board-room might change, it is not clear whether it is the newly “empowered” who change the ethos of the board-room, or it is the board-room that changes the ethics of the newly “empowered”. Worse still, some major BEE deals have involved South African blacks fronting for foreign importing companies in deals that end up displacing local jobs and local investment. Overwhelmingly BEE measures have been used adroitly by South African monopoly capital as a means of re-gaining its influence and foothold within governing circles after the demise of white minority rule. In this respect they are part of the general weakness of the first phase of the NDR. Their largely redistributive character has produced change without transformation.

Corruption - another variant of redistribution, and another capitalist means to achieving a foothold within the democratic state (and political and labour formations)

Corruption is another, and particularly corrosive, counter-revolutionary form of unproductive redistribution. There are many factors behind the levels of corruption currently plaguing our society – but one of these that is too easily forgotten is, precisely, the conundrum that confronted monopoly capital after 1994. It no longer enjoyed the same level of assured access to the governing elite. While capitalists in general will tend to criticise corruption in general (it is a cost to business and therefore to profitability), as INDIVIDUALS or as INDIVIDUAL corporations in competition with other corporations for tenders and favours, the corrupting of public officials easily becomes routine practice. This is a particular danger where there is an old established economic elite and a newly arrived (or different) political elite.

In saying this we are not shifting all blame for corruption on to the private sector, nor are we are remotely excusing corrupt behavior within the state, or within our own political and trade union formations. On the contrary, we should expect much higher levels of ethical probity from those committed (at least in theory) to the public interest and to a national democratic revolution. However, it is important to understand and deal with the plague of corruption not only from a purely subjective and ethical standpoint, but also understand and therefore deal decisively with its systemic features.

The second key weakness of the first phase of the NDR has been that:

Our major socio-economic redistributive efforts have been almost entirely conceptualized as TOP-DOWN STATE “DELIVERY” programmes.

Our popular mass base has been turned into “beneficiaries”, “recipients”, “clients”, “customers” of redistributive state “delivery” – and NOT active participants, not “motive forces”, not productive protagonists of transformation. Individual entitlement rather than collective responsibility has often become a prevailing attitude. These dynamics have, in turn, produced three related problems:

- As government’s massive redistributive effort gets overwhelmed by the scale of problems, or falls behind rising and often legitimate expectations, or fails to “deliver” equally at the same time to everyone – so popular anger turns on government. The top-down redistributive “delivery” model based on always insufficient fiscal resources sets up government as a sitting

duck target for anger and frustration – while monopoly capital disinvests and largely escapes blame. In fact, monopoly capital funds the diversionary ideological assault on government's "incompetence" and "corruption" (while often colluding, precisely, with this corruption).

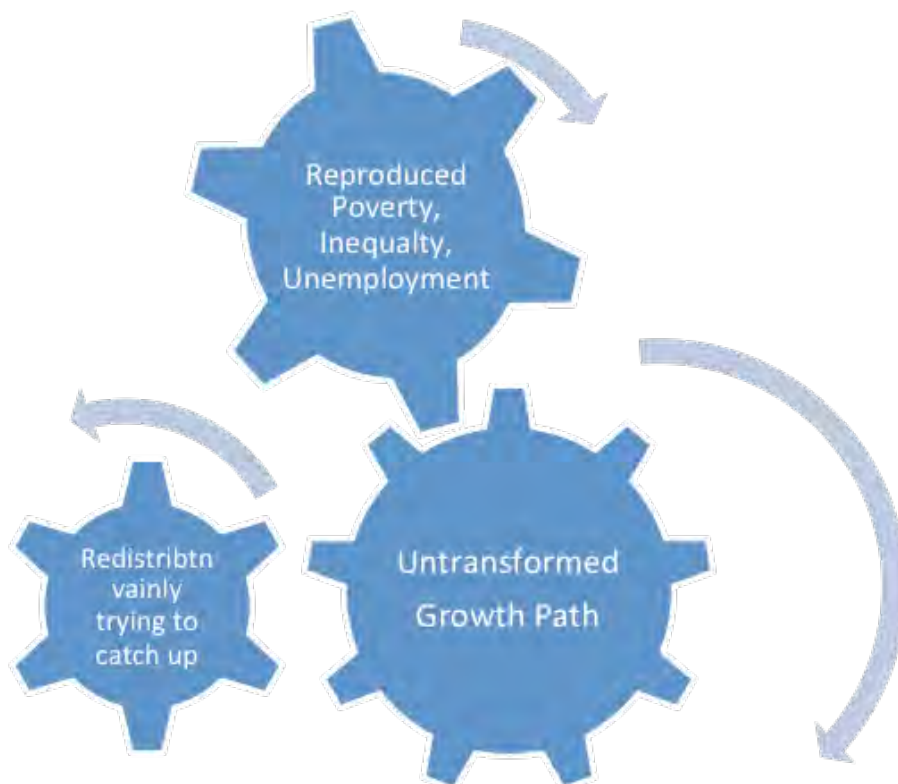
- The tendency to transform our popular mass base into individual or household "beneficiaries", "recipients", "clients" of government delivery also tends to undermine the potential cohesion of poor communities. Many "township delivery protests" are fuelled by factional rivalries within communities – backyard dwellers versus shack-dwellers for priority listing on the housing list; competing taxi associations for operating licences on new routes; local small businesses against each other and against non-South African traders. These inward-turning, intra-township rivalries contaminate and are contaminated in turn by local politics – with all of the familiar problems of patronage networks, factionalism and tenderpreneurism.
- The effective de-mobilisation of popular forces by the top-down, state "delivery" model of redistribution has also deprived us of an important means of transforming the state itself. The Freedom Charter's call not just for one-person one-vote representative democracy, but also for "DEMOCRATIC ORGANS OF SELF-GOVERNMENT" – i.e. for various forms of ACTIVE PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY has been largely lost. Since 1994 we have nominally introduced a wide range of statutory institutions and practices implying participatory democracy – community police forums, school governing bodies, ward committees, municipal participatory budgeting, etc. However, in practice most of these are non-functional, or are captured either by political functionaries, or by middle-class interests and used to preserve existing privileges. Yet, organs of popular participatory democracy are potentially our best weapon for transforming the state, and overcoming inherently negative features - bureaucratic silos, officiousness and indifference on the part of state functionaries, technocratic aloofness, and, above all, corruption.

In summary, the first phase of the NDR marked a radical politico-juridical break with the past - it abolished white minority state rule. The achievements of this first phase need to be continuously advanced, deepened and defended. However, the redistributive emphasis of this first phase was insufficiently complemented by (or integrated into) a radical programme of transformation of our productive economy and the systemic social, economic and spatial features that support its growth path dependency. These are features that continue to reproduce crisis levels of unemployment, inequality and poverty (as well as corrosive realities like embedded corruption). Moreover, the emphasis on a top-down, state "delivery" of redistribution has effectively demobilised the key popular bloc of forces, re-routing energies into individualistic advancement, factionalism, or anti-government frustration.

Instead of a Virtuous Cycle in which the Growth Path is job creating, poverty alleviating and more egalitarian and therefore also creates additional resources for redistribution:



Instead of this we have:

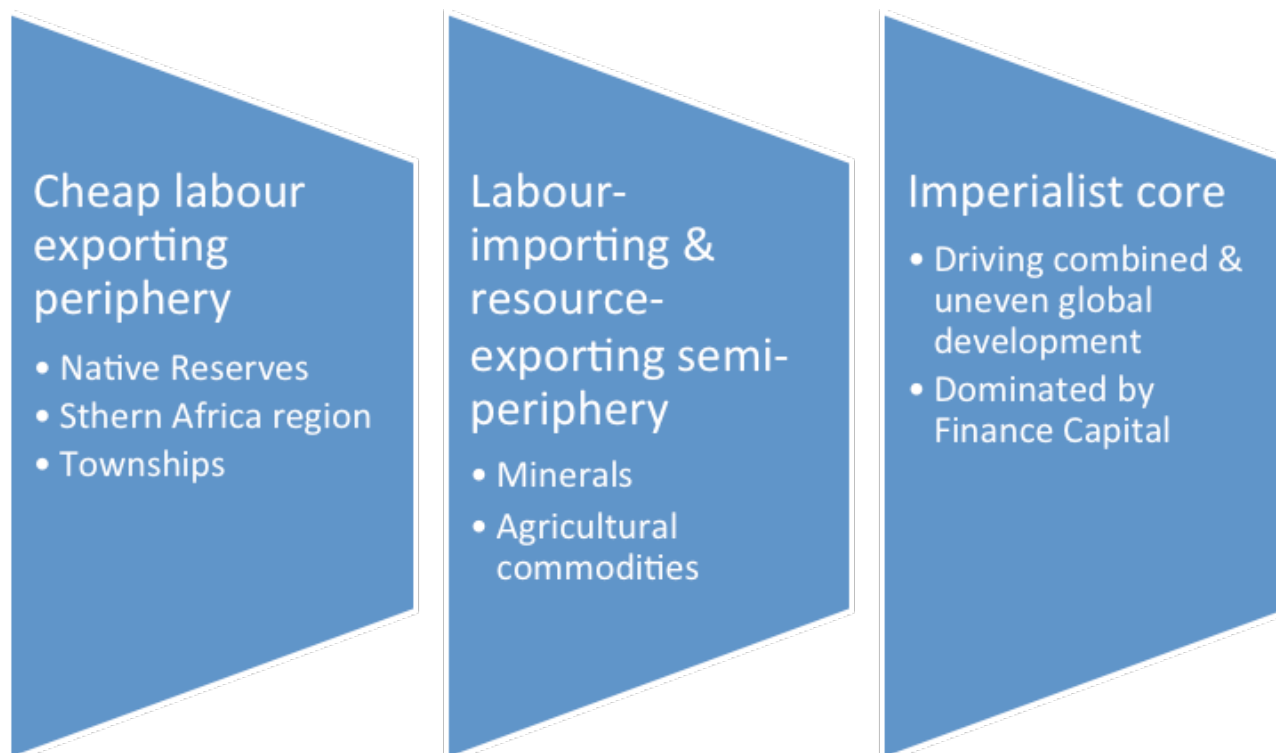


In the next section we pose the basic and critical question:

What are the “roots”, the problematic systemic features of our productive economy that continue to reproduce crisis levels of unemployment, poverty and inequality?

To answer this question, it is useful to revisit the concept of **Colonialism of a Special Type (CST)**. In the first place, it is important to remember that industrial capitalism did not emerge organically within SA. It was an imperialist-driven and externally imposed process in the late 19th century. From the 1910 formation of the Union of SA, the nation-state we still call SA, exhibited **two colonial-type core/periphery articulations, two relations that both involved marginalisation AND simultaneous subordinate inclusion of the marginalised**:

- An **“internal”**, “racialised” articulation or relationship between a white minority bloc and a brutally dispossessed (i.e. proletarianised) black majority, marginalised into “native” reserves and later urban townships as a huge pool of under-employed, a reserve army of labour - forced to sell labour power on a distant capitalist market
- An **“external”** colonial relationship establishing the semi-peripheral positioning of SA’s emergent capitalist system. This involved SA’s incorporation into but subordination within the global imperialist accumulation chain – essentially as an exporter of primary commodities (mainly minerals) produced on the basis of super-exploited (cheap/black) labour;



The internal colonial-type articulation was grounded through the first half of the 20th century in an “internal” core/periphery relation between what Harold Wolpe insightfully analysed as “an articulation between two modes of production” – an advanced **industrial capitalist mode** centred on mining, on the one hand, and subsistence farming based in **a patriarchal mode** in the reserves (and wider southern Africa), on the other. At the heart of this core/periphery relationship was the reproduction (in the subordinate mode) of “cheap” migrant labour for the industrial core.

By mid-20th century the centrality of this version of the “internal” colonial articulation was considerably under strain with the exhaustion of the productive capacity of the reserves, the growth of secondary industry in SA, especially during the war years, and increasing black urbanisation.

“**Apartheid**” should be seen as a relatively successful, four-decades long, capitalist driven perpetuation of the earlier internal colonial articulation that had been underpinned by two modes of production. The apartheid regime sought, on the one hand, to preserve this articulation by sustaining the marginal productivity of the reserves through land-care and agricultural extension work, and the strengthening of patriarchal subordination of those in the reserves - with the consolidation of the repressive Bantustan apparatus. However, greater focus now shifted to urban forced removals and the mass construction of peripheral urban black townships developing a new form of labour migrancy – daily migrancy – that perpetuated the simultaneous exclusion and inferior inclusion of the black majority.

It is **the combination of these two colonial-type** articulations (an internal and an external relationship) in their inter-dependence that lies at the heart of what might be described as **colonialism of a special type**. For a variety of reasons, through the 1990s, the external, imperialist-imposed, semi-peripheral subordination of SA within the global capitalist system was under-emphasised within our movement.

Advancing a second radical phase of the NDR requires that we now re-surface more clearly the IMPERIALIST dimension of our persisting structural problems

By approaching SA’s politico-economic history through the lens of CST we help to locate the the systemic legacy features we are dealing with in the context of a world capitalist system with its

inherent tendencies towards combined and uneven global development, or development and under-development, core and periphery. This helps to avoid several illusions that have had a negative impact on our ability to accurately chart a strategic way forward in the post-1994 reality.

The concept of “imperialism” disappeared from official ANC programmatic documents in the 1990s and early 2000s. Linked to this vanishing act was the exaggerated “exceptionalism” attributed to apartheid and the related view that apartheid was essentially all about “racism”- which it partly was, of course, but with “racism” becoming de-linked from any objective and systemic socio-economic realities. While SA, like any social formation, has its own unique features, the notion that “apartheid” was absolutely unique globally played into the 1990s neo-liberal “end of history” narrative. With apartheid abolished (and the Soviet bloc disintegrated), SA was seen as “returning to a happy family of nations” – “normality” was restored.

Understanding SA’s political economy legacy as the legacy of a colonial variant of combined and uneven development in the imperialist era, i.e., as a local variant of a wider and persisting global imperialist reality, helps to explain why the end of apartheid hasn’t produced domestic (or global) “normality”.

While it is no longer appropriate to describe the post-1994 SA as a case of CST, most of the core systemic features hard-wired into SA’s subordinate capitalist growth path remain. These key features are **systemic** in the sense that they are inter-related, inter-dependent and mutually self-reinforcing. They are:

- The **continued subordination to the imperialist core of SA’s political economy as a semi-periphery within the global division of labour**;
- The **domestic dominance of the minerals-finance monopoly sector tied into global financialisation** – with an historically under-developed manufacturing sector, in particular;
- The existence of a highly **monopolized financial sector** dominated by four large banking oligopolies;
- **High levels of monopoly concentration** across all sectors – with an historically under-developed SMME and co-operative sector;
- **Stark spatial inequalities, a symptom of the pattern of development/under-development** – between SA and its southern African neighbourhood; between urban centres and rural areas within the country; and in the persisting urban apartheid legacy. These spatial realities continue to be hard-wired into the energy, logistical, and built environment infrastructures of our country and region;
- The **education and training system** (which we are still struggling to transform), remains a critical element in the reproduction of racialised inequality, and specifically of the reproduction of a reserve army of unskilled and semi-skilled workers; and
- A productive trajectory that is energy-intensive, with its origins in the mining revolution, that continues to **recklessly plunder our natural resources and damage the environment**.

It is important to underline that these are not random elements but systemic features that remain a deep-rooted legacy. They are the systemic features of South African capitalism that, in mutually reinforcing each other, tend to lock our society into a persisting and problematic path dependency. Precisely because they are systemic, any attempt to transform one of these aspects (for example a transformed education and training system) without simultaneously addressing the others (including, for instance,

significant re-industrialisation to employ graduates and artisans) is likely to end in frustration and failure.

Paradoxically, in many ways these problematic features of SA's productive economy have been further entrenched since 1994

This has been the result of:

- The power, mobility and strategic capacity of monopoly capital;
- Global economic developments;
- Poor economic policy choices, weak capacity and a lack of strategic discipline on the part of government; and
- The weakening of popular activism and particularly weakening of the progressive trade union movement, the result, in part, of a major (radical in its own way) capitalist-driven restructuring of the work-place and the labour market.

Notwithstanding the democratic breakthrough of 1994 and the major redistributive programme of government, the balance of class forces has shifted unfavourably over the past 20-years for the working class and poor. Private monopoly capital has been the principal beneficiary of our hard-won democratic breakthrough. Private monopoly capital has used our democracy and the ending of apartheid-era sanctions to dramatically increase its profit rate, to appropriate a growing proportion of surplus for profit at the expense of workers' wages and at the expense of fiscal resources, and has failed to significantly re-invest profits into productive investment within our economy. These trends are clearly illustrated in the following three Tables:

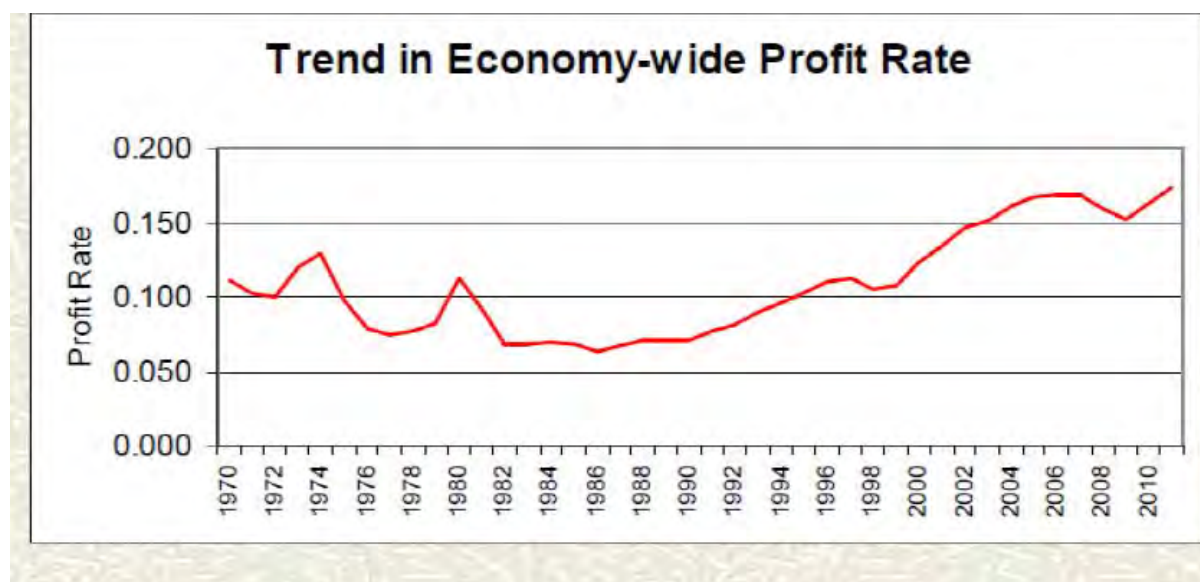


Table 1: Profit rate in SA, 1970 – 2011 (Profit rate = total net operating surplus relative to total capital stock (Source: Dick Forslund, AIDC)

Falling wage-share of GDP since 1993

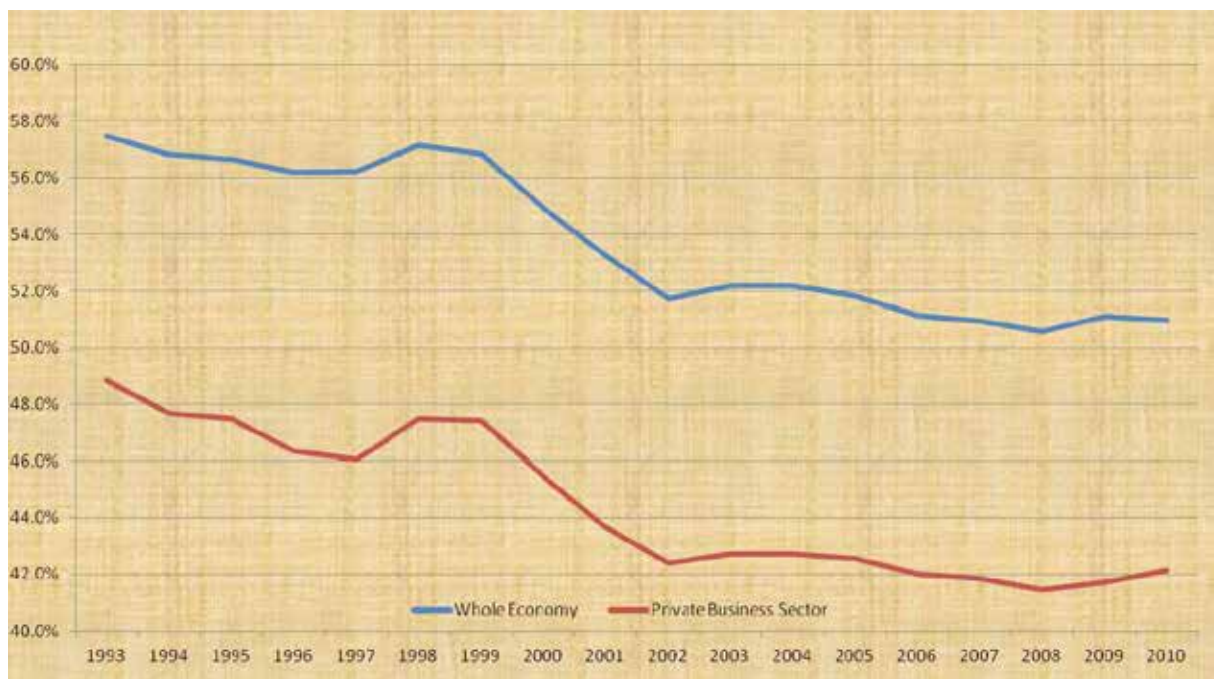


Table 2 – Falling wage share of GDP in SA since 1993 (source Forslund, ibid)

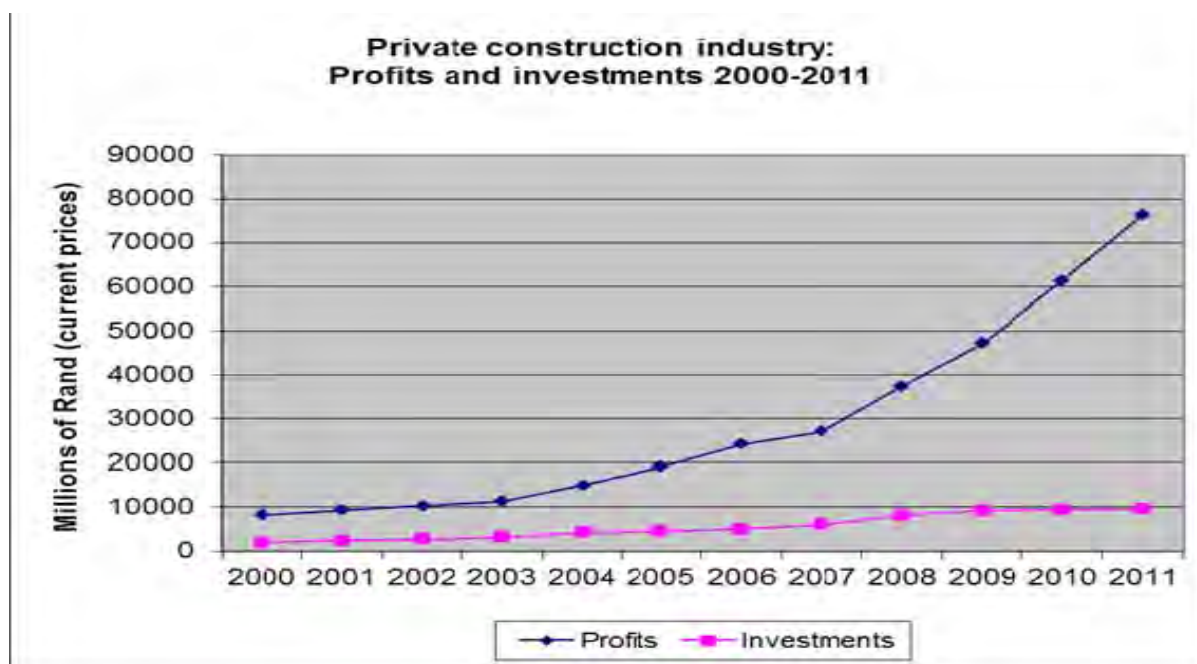
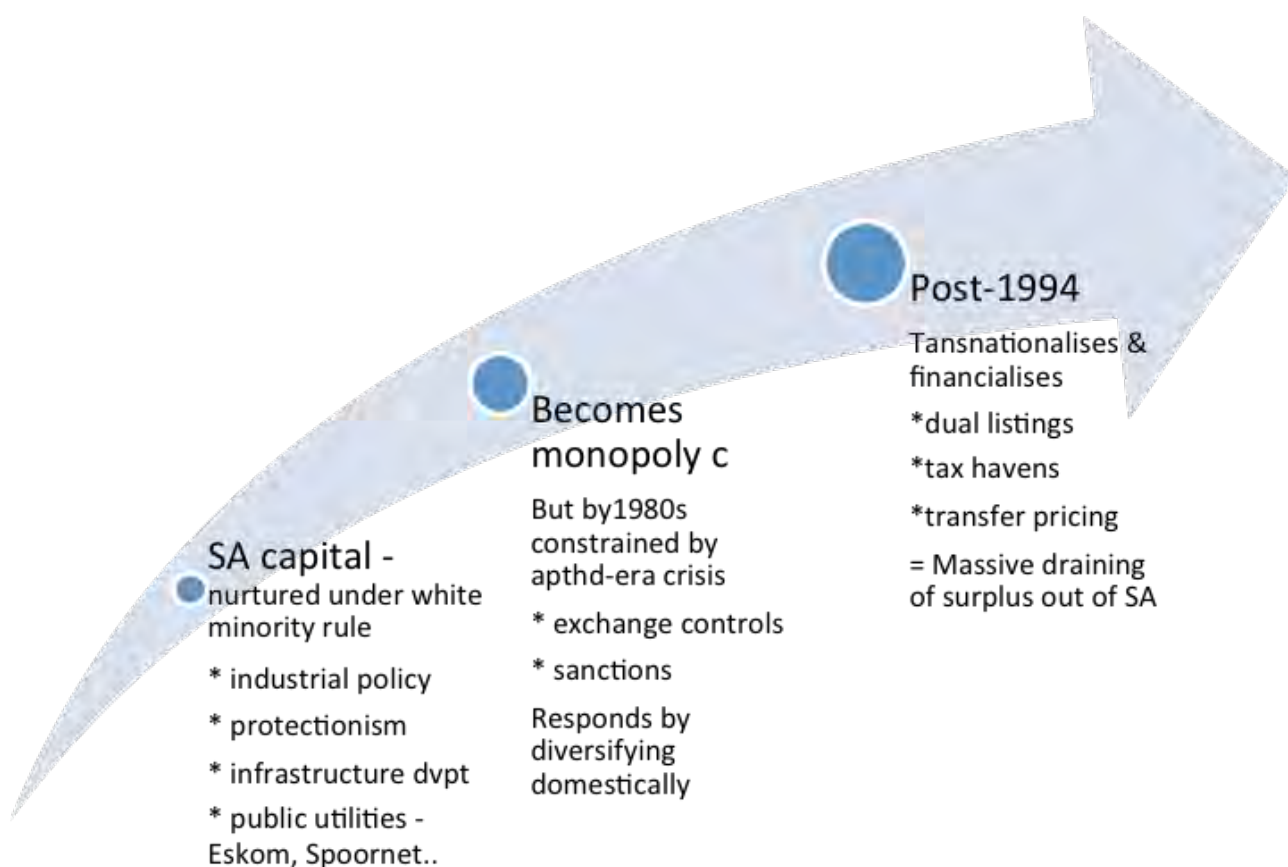


Table 3 – StatsSA for “Gross operating surplus” & SARB for “Gross fixed capital expenditure” – (Source, Forslund, ibid)

Table 3 reflects the growing disparity between profits earned by the construction sector and actual fixed investment made back into infrastructure. This is particularly notable given the fact that there has been considerable public sector investment in infrastructure in the run-up to the hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, and in the 2009-2014 fourth ANC-led administration in which over R1-trillion was invested in infrastructure. The growing disparity between private sector profits and private sector investment in SA is likely to be even greater in other sectors.

These tendencies, which have dramatically increased since 1994, have been driven by both external and internal realities:

- General global capitalist restructuring over the past three decades – involving increased transnationalisation of operations, and, especially, run-away financialisation. The latter, a response to the crises of over-accumulation, falling rates of profit, and long-term stagnation in the developed capitalist core, has seen productive economic activity increasingly swamped by speculative financial activity (the global casino economy). This restructuring has resulted in the weakening of trade unions, growing inequality, the rolling back of the welfare state, and the unravelling of explicit or implicit social accords throughout the developed capitalist core.
- In the late 1970s and through the 1980s, SA's financial, mining and other monopoly sectors were considerably locked out of this global capitalist restructuring as a result of anti-apartheid economic and financial sanctions, as well as stringent apartheid foreign exchange controls and other defensive measures. Bottled-up surplus generated within the leading monopoly finance and mining sectors of our economy was invested into diversified activity. Mining houses for instance invested, in this period, into forestry, agro-processing, logistics, retail and manufacturing – stimulating re-industrialisation, local beneficiation and, indeed, a growing industrial base for a resurgent trade union movement. The end of apartheid and the lifting of sanctions marked a dramatic reversal of these processes.



As a result of this rapid and massive process of trans-nationalisation and the expatriation of capital, the democratic South African government now increasingly has to engage former SA monopolies (born and bred within our country and grown rich on massive fiscal support and on the sweat of millions of South African workers) as foreign investors.

Here are just a few examples of how these processes have developed rapidly post-1994:

ABSA Bank – one of 4 banking monopolies that dominate SA’s financial sector – but who owns it?

Absa’s origins are in the early mobilisation of capital by Afrikaner capitalists. Absa itself was formed in 1991 out of a merger between United, Allied and Volkskas. In 1992 it acquired the Bankorp group including Trustbank.

In 2005 Barclays UK purchased 56,4% of Absa. In 2013 Barclays increased its share-holding in Absa to 62,3% and the name was changed to Barclays Africa Group Ltd. As at June 2013 ABSA/Barclay’s Africa shareholders were located in:

- UK – 57,6%
- US & Canada – 8,8%
- Other countries - 7,4%
- SA – 26,2%

When Barclay’s Africa CEO Maria Ramos calls for a “social covenant” (presumably with government and labour) – where does she derive her mandate from?

AFGRI – how a former SA agricultural co-op was bought out by US speculators

Afgri is an agricultural services company dating back 90 years. Originally a co-op supported by successive white minority governments. After 1994, instead of transforming this co-op to service emerging and subsistence farmers, we allowed it to become (like other former agricultural co-ops - KWV, Clover, Senwes) a private company listed on the JSE in 1996. Financial speculation and profit maximisation displaced agricultural production and food security concerns.

In 2014 Afgri was de-listed from the JSE and bought out by a little-known North American based financial speculator group registered in the tax-haven of Mauritius.

But Afgri remains a strategic player in our agricultural sector:

- Owning a vast proportion of South Africa’s grain storage capacity,
- Providing services to 7,000 mainly commercial farmers through rural-based retail outlets and silos.
- It is the largest supplier of John Deere tractors in Africa.
- It was recently subsidised through governments’ tractor support programme for emerging farmers, and it acts as an agent for the Land Bank, distributing some R2bn a year on behalf of the bank.

A critical asset for national food security is now a financialised entity owned by foreign speculator.

These are just two examples of a major trend underway since the mid-1990s. In the late 1990s Anglo, De Beers, Old Mutual and SAB Miller, Investec, Didata, Gencor, Liberty, etc. were allowed to dual list, in effect moving much of their corporate tax responsibilities, dividend payments and investments off-shore. More recently, furniture giant Steinhoff International received a Reserve Bank go-ahead in July 2014 to move its primary listing to Frankfurt. Also this year BHP Billiton has announced plans to “de-merge” most of its local mines into a separate company. Last year Gold Fields unbundled Sibanye Gold. This year AngloGold Ashanti, the third largest gold miner in the world, tried to split its assets into a South African bundle, but was blocked by its own share-holders who were unwilling to fork out R20-billion to ensure that the South African bundle would be debt-free – a condition correctly set by the Reserve Bank. Bidvest, the logistics company, has also recently announced its plans to list its food business in London.

But perhaps the most invidious case is that of SASOL:

- Created in 1950 as public entity

“SASOL sits pretty – what about SA?”

- SASOL was set up in 1950 as a state-owned entity
- Subsidised for many years to cover the difference between the global price of oil (around \$25) and SASOL's cost to produce oil from coal (around \$40??)
- Privatised from 1979, shares sold at discount to established monopoly capital as controlled by the bourgeoisie who were, historically, white.
- Currently supplies about 35% of our petrol needs
- But global price of oil now around \$90 - \$100/barrel, and SASOL sells at the pump at import parity price – **we are subsidising super-profits for SASOL**
- In 2006 with global oil price around \$60, Min of Finance established a Task Team to look at a windfall tax proposal
- In 2007 the Task Team recommended a windfall tax
- However, instead Treasury reached “gentleman's” agreement – in exchange for no windfall tax SASOL to invest in a new coal-to-oil plant in Limpopo (Mafutha)
- 2012 - global oil price \$120, SASOL's net profit = R24bn – **but still no Mafutha**
- 2013 – **SASOL announces R200bn investment in gas to liquid plant in...Louisiana, USA!!!**

Even neo-liberal conservatives in SA were outraged: “Born courtesy of taxpayers...SA's biggest company and world leader in various critical energy technologies is investing ever more deeply in the US than it is here. This may be the right thing for the company, but is it right for the country?” (David Gleason, “SASOL sits pretty – what about SA?”, Business Day, 4 July 2013).

This massive disinvestment out of SA is presented by business interests as a “vote of no confidence” in the present government. See for instance a recent The Times front page story “Big business votes with its feet” (October 6, 2014). The story tells us that:

“a great trek of companies from SA is under way, even as government talks of ‘re-industrialising’ the economy. Multinational companies increasingly view their South African operations as ‘orphan assets’, says Investment Solutions economist Chris Hart.”

South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry policy analyst, Pietman Roos, is quoted later in the story blaming the Zuma administration over the past five-and-a-half years:

“the high cost of doing business here and general unpredictability of policy changes are major reasons” for disinvestment.

There are several things in this pervasive perspective that require critical engagement:

- Most of these “multi-nationals” are actual (or former) South African companies that benefited from decades of support from white minority regimes, including the supply of cheap black labour. The “vote of no confidence” is a vote of no confidence in a non-racial democracy that includes worker rights.

- The disinvestment trends started in the mid-1990s with Anglo, De Beers, Old Mutual, SAB Miller, Investec, Didata, Gencor, Liberty etc. being allowed to dual list overseas. This is not a process that has suddenly happened over the last five years.
- Part of the “cost-of-doing-business” complaint relates to electricity costs. As we have noted above, it is only since 1994 that Eskom has been given a major developmental mandate (providing 7 million electricity connections to poor households in 20 years, for instance, versus a mere 5 million household connections in the entire previous century). This is one (admittedly not the only) reason for an increased electricity tariff for business.
- Particularly in the case of the mining houses, the restructuring of their mining interests in SA often relates to the approaching exhaustion of mines that have been intensively exploited over several decades. Again, these moves often have very little to do with “policy uncertainty”, or the cost of labour.
- It is important to understand that these processes of re-location and financialisation are global trends, and not specific SA phenomena.

Monopoly capital constantly seeks to use its power and mobility to leverage ever more policy concessions out of government – it bullied the Mandela administration, it bullied the Mbeki administration, just as it seeks to bully the Zuma administration with dire threats of disinvestment, and complaints about policy uncertainty.

Connecting all of this to the earlier analysis of SA’s underlying systemic crises we can see that (former) South African monopoly capital is increasingly solving its own semi-peripheralisation within the global imperialist value chain by becoming global itself. This involves a relative (and in some cases complete) de-linking from SA. It might be good for monopoly capital – but the massive disinvestment out of SA is the most active factor in deepening South Africa’s triple crisis of unemployment, poverty and inequality.

This massive outflow of capital is also directly responsible for SA’s foreign debt rising from \$25bn in 1994 to \$140bn today. It is a ratio to GDP that is as high as the mid-1980s apartheid-era debt crisis. Our foreign debt ratio creates further dependencies on speculative investment from abroad, and increasing exposure to the verdict of ratings agencies and “investor sentiment”.

What is to be done? In what follows we will argue that any counter-offensive requires using state power and popular power to effect, in turn, a RELATIVE DE-LINKING of our society from the globally dominant imperialist political economy. We say “relative” – because there is no immediate or medium-term prospect for a complete rupture.

The NATIONAL in the NDR

We are now in a better position to give more meaningful content to the concept of a **National Democratic Revolution** in its second phase. The “national democratic” in NDR refers to three critical and inter-related dimensions:

- The struggle for a democratic **non-racial** society – overcoming the terrible legacy of racial oppression, and the persistence of racism in our society (not least in the work-place);
- The struggle for **nation building** – and in particular the struggle to forge the **socio-economic** material conditions for national unity – which means the transformation of the “**internal colonial**”, core/periphery features of our society that still persist;
- The struggle for democratic **national sovereignty** – in other words the struggle to overcome SA’s

semi-peripheral **economic** subordination within the global economy, in the process defending, for instance, our democratic electoral mandate in the face of monopoly capital's persistent attempts to dictate different policies.

The first dimension is the one that occupied prime place within the first phase – the **de-racialisation of our society**. As we have noted already, this was largely attempted in the first phase through addressing the legitimate **national grievances** of the black majority (Africans in particular, blacks in general). In the first phase, the approach to this imperative focused on extending and consolidating equal rights to all (regardless of race) and of applying a range of positive discriminatory **redress measures** for those historically disadvantaged. This aspect of the struggle **remains a critical pillar of the NDR**.

However, as we have already indicated, because emphasis on this dimension tended to be insufficiently complemented by other dimensions of the “national question”, many of the systemic underpinnings of national/racial oppression of the majority have remained stubbornly in place. Despite extensive redress measures, the triple crises of unemployment, poverty and inequality remain strongly inflected by race. That is why it is essential to more forcefully highlight two other critical dimensions of the “national question” – the “external” and the “internal” dimensions historically associated with CST.

The external CST dimension – the ongoing struggle for democratic national sovereignty

This is a struggle to ensure that a national democratic popular mandate and its key developmental objectives are not continuously usurped and undermined by external (imperialist or trans-nationalised ex-SA monopoly capital) interests and their local comprador (fronting) allies. This relates to a struggle to overcome SA's semi-peripheral **economic** position within the global capitalist system – in other words, to transform the “external” core-periphery relation. A range of interventions are required:

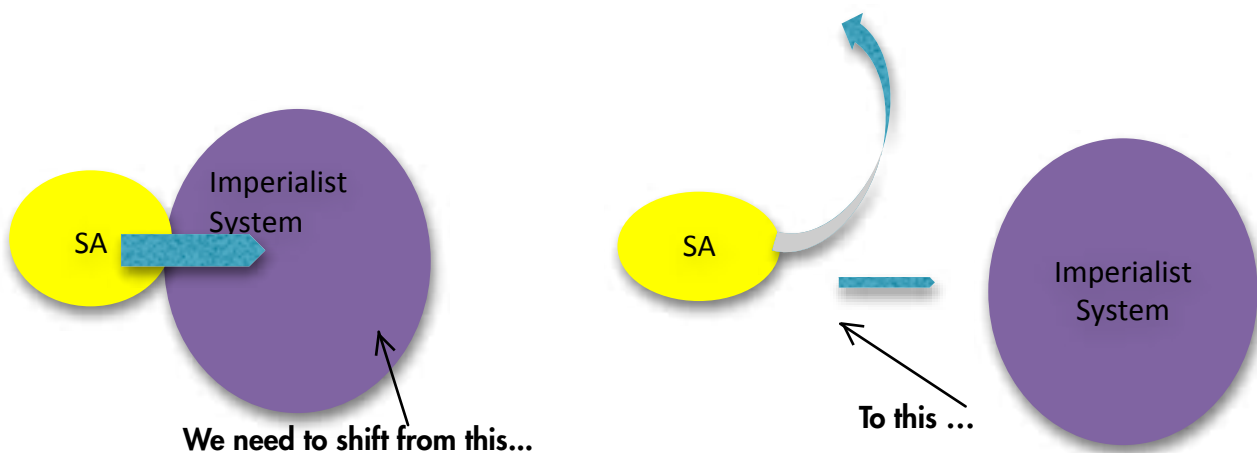
- Most important is the **re-industrialisation** of our economy so that we move up the global productive value chain. It is notable that the three key spurts of industrialisation within our economy occurred at times when there was a **relative de-linking** from the **imperialist north** – during the two World Wars (1914-18 and 1939-1945), and, paradoxically, in the late-70s into the 80s when international sanctions (together with prescribed asset legislation and tough exchange controls) compelled the dominant South African mineral-energy-finance complex to deploy surplus into domestic diversification in manufacturing, forestry, logistics and retail. It must be added that these period of relative de-linking (notably the first two) were accompanied in the 1930s and 1960s with the determined use by the respective minority regimes of a range of state interventionist measures into the economy – extensive development of SOEs, industrial policy measures, skilling initiatives (using SOEs and directed at white artisanal training), prescribed assets, the development of coops, agricultural marketing boards, trade protectionism, etc. The monopoly sector has used the post-1994 “normalisation” of SA's international relations to reverse domestic diversification and investment. Post-1994 we have seen a major process of de-industrialisation as capital surplus has been expatriated through divestment from horizontal linkages within SA, with an emphasis on “maximising” of global share-holder value, and accelerated financialisation and trans-nationalisation by major South African monopolies (Anglo, Old Mutual, SAB, SASOL, etc.). Illegal capital flight, dual listings, foreign entry into our economy (Walmart), the misguided relaxation of exchange controls, and our inordinate reliance on short-term speculative flows have all played a part in **deepening** SA's subordination within the global capitalist accumulation process. A critical component of the second phase is to roll-back what has been a hugely problematic reversal since the early 1990s.
- If “relative de-linking” from the imperialist north was a key factor in earlier spurts of industrialisation

what factors are there in the present that could be leveraged for a relative de-linking now? Increased global multi-polarity is an important factor – and this is the context in which BRICS, for instance, needs to be viewed. Even more important for SA are the possibilities of regional development – an African agenda that must, in turn, break with the old-apartheid era, neo-colonial, sub-imperialist relationship between SA and its region. We now require (for SA's own sovereign advance) a balanced, region-wide process of development and industrialisation.

- This in turn needs to be supported by infrastructure development that begins to break with a largely persisting (neo-)colonial pattern of logistical infrastructure premised on natural resource extraction from our region to the imperial north - pit-to-port and plantation-to-port rail lines, for instance, or energy and water supply infrastructure still monopolised by mines and large corporate agriculture. The balanced development and industrialisation of our region requires a different pattern of infrastructure (including logistics, water, energy, and IT). The critical PICC SIP 17 (the North-South corridor), which has failed to be consolidated in the past three years, becomes especially important in this context.
- Our trade, diplomatic and even military/peace-keeping strategic interventions all need to be guided by these developmental priorities.

RELATIVE DE-LINKING

- Re-industrialisation
- Tougher capital controls
- Regional Development
- BRICS



Transforming our skewed internal development – placing our society onto a new growth and developmental path

Because of their systemic inter-linkages, addressing the “internal” CST legacy is, of course, closely linked to the struggle for national sovereignty, and many of the same programmatic priorities are required.

It is important to underline that the policy fundamentals for these programmatic priorities to place our society onto a new growth and development path are already basically in place, and they include:

The New Growth Path whose core focus is to place our productive economy onto an **employment-creating** trajectory. The NGP identifies 13 jobs and growth drivers: Infrastructure build; mining and beneficiation; manufacturing; tourism; greening the economy; rural development; the Industrial Policy Action Plan; agriculture and agro-processing; the knowledge economy; the social economy; the public sector; education and training; and African regional development.

The Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP) is a key pillar the NGP. This is a re-iterative state-led action plan continuously updated and focused on **Re-industrialisation**. Beneficiation of our mineral resources is a key pillar of IPAP, building on the platform of what remains SA’s relative competitive advantage. Agro-processing, localisation and state procurement policies are other key points of leverage for driving local manufacturing jobs.

The National Infrastructure Plan co-ordinated through the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission (PICC) through 18 over-arching Strategic Integrated Plans (SIPs). Amongst other things the NIP seeks to support the re-industrialisation programme by:

- Facilitating **beneficiation** and breaking with the excessive pit-to-port, export configuration of our **logistics system** by ensuring better logistical connectivity to local upstream and down-stream manufacturing;
- Further supporting the re-industrialisation programme by ensuring that key **manufactured inputs for infrastructure are locally manufactured**; and

The NIP is also focused upon using the infrastructure build programme to **radically transform the core-periphery** pattern of development/under-development hard-wired into the “internal” dimension of CST. This latter critically involves **transformative urban development** (new human settlement patterns, public transport, etc.); and the **transformation of under-development in rural areas**.

Other important strategic interventions to place our economy on to a new growth and development path include:

- ▶ the ANC’s **State Intervention in the Mining Sector (SIMS)** policy;
- ▶ interventions to break the **collusive conduct and market power of private monopoly capital** – through a range of regulatory and other interventions, using the Competition Commission and related institutions;
- Transforming the **financial sector – DFIs**, industrial investment, prescribed assets, trade union investment funds and greater working class strategic control over retirement funds.
- Development of **SMMEs and coops** around the industrialisation process
- Transforming the **education and training system to align** with and support our developmental and productive economy objectives

- Changing our **energy mix** – greater self-reliance, greater sustainability
- Linking **BBBEE more effectively to our developmental and productive economy objectives** – with an emphasis on fostering a productive entrepreneurship, including a new cadre of black industrialists.

As can be seen from the broad outline of key strategic interventions required to advance a decisive transition to a new growth and development path, **the second radical phase of the NDR is not something we are just talking about. Many of its key elements are already under implementation. What is required is a more decisive and more coherent effort.**

There also needs to be a better aligned macro-economic policy package that supports all of the above programmatic priorities.

Ecological sustainability and the Second Radical Phase

SA's environment has been gravely damaged by the legacy of CST and its economic growth path:

- The centrality of **MINING** and mining monopoly has resulted in huge damage to environments and to the health of miners and mining communities. Acid Mine Drainage is now a major threat to significant parts of Gauteng. Un-rehabilitated mine dumps and abandoned mines are monuments to the ecological irresponsibility of the mining corporations that have extracted non-renewable wealth out of our country and then walked away.
- SA's abundant cheap coal-resources locked us into an **ENERGY-INTENSIVE** growth path with amongst the highest per capita carbon emissions in the world. Both Eskom and SASOL are major polluters – SA contributes 50% of the entire African continent's CO2 emissions. The cheap energy produced from coal-fired power stations (until recently) also led to perverse "industrial policy" incentives – like the post-1994 20-year contracts with BHP aluminium smelters in Richards Bay in which electricity was guaranteed at bargain rates. SA doesn't mine bauxite (the mineral used for the production of aluminium). The two Richards Bay smelters have provided cheap electricity to BHP, plugging into our grid, and consuming the equivalent amount of electricity that could electrify a medium sized city.
- The second historical pillar of SA's economy – **AGRICULTURE** – has also had a major negative ecological impact. Racially-skewed land ownership and, over the past decades, the rapid monopoly concentration of production with increasing capitalisation has led, not only to job losses, but also to excessive use of pesticides, herbicides, fertilisers, as well GM crops with negative environmental impacts. Large commercial mono-crop farming has displaced more ecologically sustainable mixed-crop medium scale farming.
- **The SPATIAL** features (core-periphery) intrinsically linked into our CST legacy also have many damaging ecological features:
 - > Over-crowding in the labour-reserves (the ex-bantustans) has resulted in major degradation of soils, and serious erosion
 - > Townships and informal settlements are often located down-wind of mine-dumps, or down-stream of chemical plants, or in precarious ecological environments prone to flooding, for instance. Climate change is likely to have an increased impact on the resilience of most working-class communities
 - > By contrast, private property speculation has driven skewed urbanisation for the middle strata - suburban development, favouring car-dependent, "green belt" sprawling settlements. Apart from traffic related pollution, this suburban development has displaced small-scale farming and market-garden production. Scarce water resources are consumed in swimming pools and golf courses.

- On a **REGIONAL** scale, the historical centrality of mining in SA's economy has resulted in massive economic and population growth in our Gauteng economic hub. Local water resources are inadequate to sustain Gauteng's current growth trajectory. Gauteng is reliant on water from the Lesotho Highlands Water Scheme. There is now a race against time to complete the second phase of this scheme, while at the same time dealing with Acid Mine Drainage which is currently being dealt with by diluting AMD with clean water – a massive waste of a valuable and scarce resource.

These and other major ecological sustainability challenges in SA present us with a serious dilemma as we advance a second radical phase of the NDR. A central pillar of our job creation priority is re-industrialisation leveraged off our abundant mineral resources. However, beneficiation is **ENERGY INTENSIVE** and in the foreseeable future the principal source of base-load electricity will have to come from coal-fired power stations. Apart from nuclear energy, the other renewable sources available to us (solar and wind), while their costs are becoming comparable to coal, are simply not able to provide reliable base-load to support industrialisation.

This does not mean that we should be dismissive of the imperative of placing SA onto an ecologically sustainable development path. This will require effective, state-led planning with clear long-range understanding of trade-offs and risks. Also required is a serious state capacity to regulate land-use and water-use and the exploitation of natural resources. Left to anarchic market forces the irreversible destruction of our environment will continue. A key emphasis of the second phase of the NDR must be to ensure greater resilience for urban and rural working class communities.

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Relative de-linking on the internal front – Changing the balance of forces, or how to leverage a relative de-linking of popular strata from the depredations of the capitalist market

In earlier sections of this intervention we briefly sketched out how colonial dispossession and apartheid social-engineering squeezed millions of South Africans out of productive, homestead-based communal work and into coerced employment for someone else's profit. For those living in former bantustans, or in urban townships and informal settlements, the prospects of a sustainable livelihood still rest considerably on the chance of employment, that is, selling their labour power on a capitalist market. But the core crisis of our society is precisely that there are many more proletarianised sellers than capitalist buyers. This, in turn, reproduces a highly skewed class balance of forces – in which millions of South Africans have no alternative livelihood, and are forced into employment on unfavourable terms as low paid temporary workers, as labour brokered casuals, etc. This "precariat", this huge reserve army of labour further weakens the negotiating leverage of the formally employed working class.

This is why a wide range of initiatives, including the many redistributive initiatives noted earlier (**social grants, social housing, non-fee schooling, access to health-care, the roll-out of subsidized public transport and the progressive de-commodification of at least basic amounts of water and electricity**) should all be understood not just as “poverty alleviation”, **but as state-led interventions that potentially help to alter the class balance of forces by partially de-linking the livelihoods of the popular strata from naked dependency on the capitalist market.**

Moreover, the more we strengthen these **social wage** interventions the less pressure is placed on the wage of the formally employed. COSATU is not incorrect when it argues that perhaps the greatest redistribution in SA is the redistribution of wages of the formally employed among extended families and other dependents in both urban and rural areas. This puts huge pressure on wage negotiations and is a factor in re-producing a stratified labour market with pockets of relatively well-paid workers where for one or another reason trade union organization is effective.

However, state-led redistributive measures, while potentially creating greater popular capacity, do not in themselves transform the productive economy.

It is important to make stronger links between existing redistributive measures and the transformation of production itself, amongst other things, in regard to:

Land reform – it is imperative that land reform is much more closely linked into a sustainable productive perspective. This involves linking land reform much more actively into the wider objective of achieving greater **food security and food sovereignty** – focusing on breaking the market domination of **agricultural, agro-processing and food retail monopolies** (which are increasingly financialised and transnationalised) – through more effective regulation, through re-building public sector support to farming, especially medium and small-scale mixed farming (through research, veterinary services, market support, localised storage and processing facilities, appropriate infrastructure, etc.). It is critical to align **land reform programmes** to a sustainable productive perspective, and to address the **democratisation of communal land tenure through the implementation of Communal Property Associations**. Urban and rural household and community food gardens are also an important component of ensuring food security and sovereignty.

The productive economy needs also to be progressively transformed through the **transformation of the work-place**, to move increasingly towards the democratization of the work-place. Key priorities are addressing the still highly racialized nature of most private sector work-places, as well as gender discrimination.

Public Employment Programmes – and the De-Commodification of Work

In response to SA’s unemployment and poverty crisis, we have developed an internationally innovative array of public employment programmes – grouped under the broad umbrella of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). In the past 10 years over 6-million work opportunities have been provided in a wide range of sectors – infrastructure, the social and culture sectors, environment, and the community work programme. Many of these public employment programmes also work closely with non-profit and community-based formations. While these programmes differ in varying ways they all involve at least three dimensions:

- Through a minimum wage (or “stipend”) they provide some basic income relief to poor households, and can be seen as a component of the social security net that we are endeavouring to broaden;
- They provide work experience in a context where millions of South Africans have little or no

experience of collective work. The work experience also comes with training – varying from fairly basic skills in the case of CWP, for instance, through to a high-level of training, in the Working on Fire programme, for instance. The intention is to restore some level of dignity to the unemployed; and

- Through these programmes, public assets are created or maintained (social infrastructure, rural roads, etc.), and services are provided (home-based care, ECD care, homework supervision, cleaning of parks, food gardens and school feeding, etc.). In some cases, the services provided make a major economic contribution. In the case of Working for Water as much as R400bn worth of water has been saved and 71% of grazing land rescued.

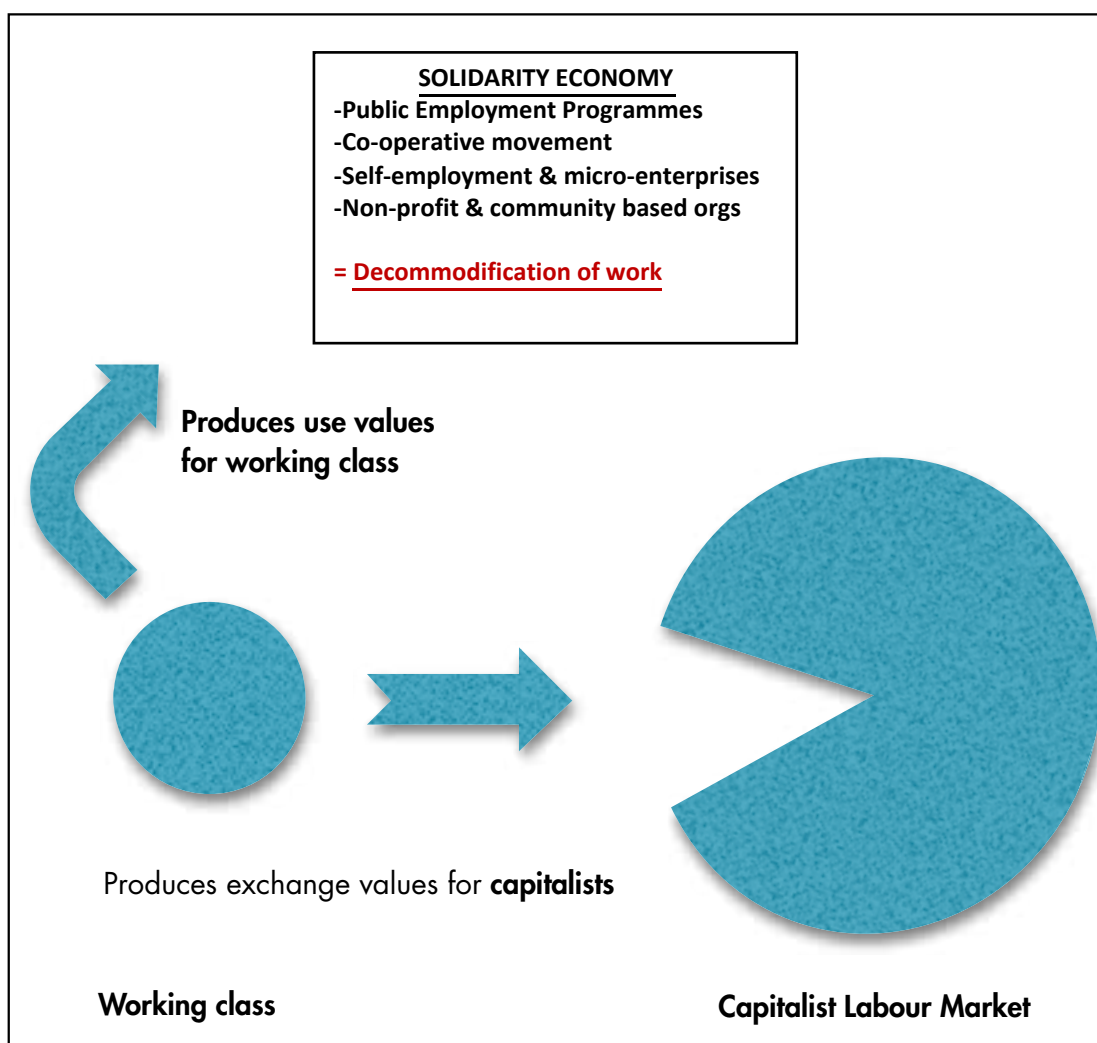
Perhaps most importantly, these public employment programmes potentially provide a relative de-linking of poor communities from the depredations of the capitalist labour market. Through community productive work they enhance community coherence, build collective resilience, foster a sense of collective responsibility for and ownership of local resources and amenities, and help to forge a different relationship between the state and popular strata. In short, they have the potential to help transform both the state and popular communities – breaking with the idea of a “top-down delivery state” servicing (often resentful) “customer citizens”. The public employment programmes create a terrain on which popular strata can once more become active protagonists (motive forces) in their own development.

Forging a different countryside – Siyakholwa in Keiskammahoek

- Siyakholwa Foundation was formed in 2007 as a non-profit organization. It was based in an old saw-mill in the village of Qobaqoba in Keiskammahoek. The original intention was to foster farming co-ops in this impoverished area of the Eastern Cape
- After trials-and-errors with the co-ops – including a bumper cabbage crop for which they could not find a market - Siyakholwa linked up with government’s Community Work Programme.
- COGTA, through the CWP programme, provides a stipend for 1,500 participants working in 37 surrounding villages. In each of the 37 villages there is a Village Committee that selects participants for the programme and collectively identifies public work in the village. This includes identifying house-holds in distress requiring home-based care; food gardens in schools and creches which also supply free meals to students; the maintenance of public facilities in the village (school buildings, the grave-yard, etc.).
- Each of the 1,500 participants works 8-days a month on community work, leaving other time to work in their own fields or do other things. The monthly stipend earned (around R500) provides some income relief to poor households – but, above all, the programme has helped to build community solidarity in the villages and a sense of social usefulness and pride among the participants.
- Siyakholwa, the non-profit organization, acts as a local implementing agent for the programme. It operates in the renovated sheds of the old saw-mill. The centre provides training and resourcing for the village food-gardens (soil conservation, composting, seeds); and other skills training – including welding, basic auto-repairs, bee-keeping, and computer literacy. In the grounds of the centre is an orchard with 1000 peach trees (providing cheap fruit to local villages and a supply of fruit for a team of women trained in jam making); a distillery to produce essential oils from rose geranium plants that grow very easily in the area with cuttings provided free to growers in the villages; and experimental food gardens, vermiculture, etc. One of the aims is to train two basic handy-men for all 37 villages. Siyakholwa training is funded partly through COGTA’s CWP budget, but other sources (private and public) are also tapped into.
- Because of its success, Siyakholwa, working with provincial government structures, is now helping to establish similar programmes in other districts of the Eastern Cape.

While the Siyakholwa Keiskammahoek project is among the more exemplary of the public employment projects in SA, there are tens of thousands of others in both rural and urban settings. We need to make better connections between our public employment programmes and a range of other popular initiatives – including cooperative development, micro-enterprises, street trading and other self-employment activities, and a wide range of non-profit and community based organisations and volunteerism. All of these require relative degrees of sheltering from the depredations of the capitalist commodity market, and all are focused primarily on securing livelihoods for their participants rather than ever-expanding surplus and profits through the exploitation of other people's labour.

Their principal "capital" is, in fact, their own individual and collective labour. In progressive circles in Latin America and Europe there are movements aimed at supporting, networking and advancing this potentially non-capitalist sector variously described as a "solidarity" , "co-operative" or "social" economy. In SA we need, as ONE component of the second radical phase of the NDR, to consolidate a relative de-linking of the poor, the un- and under-employed through consolidating a solidarity economy so that livelihoods are not entirely dependent on finding willing capitalist buyers of labour-power. In other words, this is the second relative de-linking that we need to foster as part of the second radical phase of the NDR.



THE STRUGGLE FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND THE SECOND RADICAL PHASE OF THE NDR

The struggle for substantive gender equality and the rolling back of the legacy of entrenched patriarchy are intrinsically connected to the major arguments developed throughout this intervention.

Since 1994 we have seen constitutional and legal entrenchment of gender rights. In line with other achievements of the first phase, there have been important if uneven gains made in ensuring greater gender representivity in parliament, the judiciary and senior civil service, for instance. However, all socio-economic indicators relating to the triple crisis of unemployment, poverty and inequality indicate that women (and particularly black women in rural areas and in informal settlements) continue to suffer the brunt of the crisis and its related impacts.

Friedrich Engels perceptively attributed gender discrimination to the development of a gendered division of labour in which women became responsible for less valued “reproductive” work, while men monopolised more valued “productive” work. Capitalism has deepened the discrimination by regarding much “reproductive” work, or non-market based work as “not real work”.

While patriarchy remains a factor in most societies, SA’s CST history has imparted a particularly problematic form of patriarchy. This is directly related to the use and perversion of “traditional” patriarchal authority (“traditional leadership”) in the labour reserves (the ex-Bantustans) as a critical cornerstone of the internal dimension of CST. Rural women (and children – herd-boys, makoti, etc) bore the brunt of reproducing “cheap” male migrant labour for the mines. Still today women are in the majority in the former bantustans and they continue often to be subjected to harsh patriarchal tribal authority and backward customs – suffering discrimination, for instance, in terms of the allocation of more productive land and resources.

The legacy of CST and male migrant labour is reflected in many contemporary statistics. For instance the percentage of African married women living apart from their partners is over 25% compared to other groups where the figure is 10% or less. For rural women (the majority being African) married women living apart from partners rises to 35%.

The impact of this in terms of household livelihoods is dramatic. Female-headed households are more likely to have insufficient food (21%) than male-headed households (15,8%), and are more likely to run out of money to buy food (27,2%) compared to 19,3%. (Stats SA General Household Survey 2012). This gendered vulnerability to hunger is, in turn, related:

- To higher levels of unemployment among women (in 2011, in the narrow definition, female unemployment was 27,6% compared to male unemployment of 22,2%); and
- To the fact that, when in employment, women are typically paid less, or are active in lower-paid jobs.

This is reflected in marked gender differences in economic activity. Of the economically active in SA, 69% of males and only 55% of females were involved in “market only” activities. By contrast, 37,8% of economically active females were involved only in non-market activities (compared to 25% of males). Stats SA defines “non-market economic activity” as work in which “goods are produced for consumption within the household and for which there is no payment”. It is mainly subsistence farming that is counted in this category. Stats SA does not include “housework or care for older people or children” “as these are not considered ‘economic activities’”.

In addressing gender-based oppression we must, of course, not be narrowly economic. Other

discriminatory practices, social norms and stereotypes all play a role in perpetuating gendered oppression. However, as we have argued throughout this discussion document, getting to the roots of the problem requires active transformation of the productive economy and, indeed, an interrogation of what we understand and value as “productive”. A second radical phase of the NDR requires the radical transformation of the root causes of the triple (class, race and gendered) oppression of the majority of South African women.

THE BATTLE OF IDEAS

The strategic perspective of a second radical phase of the NDR sketched out in broad brush-strokes in this intervention is, of course, not the only strategic “narrative” at play in SA at present. In fact, because we have not given sufficient context and content to the idea of a second radical phase – other narratives often enjoy greater prominence and credibility in public discourse and debate. Part of advancing and defending a second radical phase will, therefore, necessarily involve actively engaging in the battle of ideas and developing a clearer perspective of the main features and weaknesses of competing “narratives”.

Growth-then-redistribution

The dominant “narrative” remains the basically neo-liberal notion that SA’s socio-economic challenges can only (and will only) be solved through capitalist-driven growth that will “grow the cake” – providing greater resources for redistribution to address the problems of poverty and inequality. See for instance the DA’s web-site statement: “if we are to open up opportunities for all and create a prosperous, inclusive society, **the pie needs to get bigger so there is more to share.**”

While the growth-then-redistribution narrative might acknowledge some structural challenges in SA’s political economy (for example, a skills deficit, or energy challenges), it fails to go to the root of the problem. It essentially seeks to put SA back into the same “growth path” which, as this intervention has sought to illustrate, is precisely what is at the root of the reproduction of our triple crisis. For this reason, the growth-then-redistribution narrative dismisses the need for a RADICAL transformation of our **productive** economy, preferring, instead, to leave growth to the “market”.

The growth-then-redistribution narrative is further based on two flawed assumptions:

- In trumpeting growth as the cure to our problems it is essentially evoking “growth” as measured by the problematic “**GDP**” metric – but what actually is GDP measuring?
- For the growth-then-redistribution narrative the means to achieving its objective of “growth” is typically a **social compact** between government, business and labour, an “economic CODESA”.

Let’s briefly consider each of these flawed positions in turn:

The GDP myth

Internationally, and not just from left quarters, the socio-economic relevance of the GDP metric has been increasingly questioned. In 2008 Nicolas Sarkozy’s centre-right French government, for instance, appointed two economics Nobel laureates, Joseph Stiglitz and Amartya Sen to head a commission to examine the appropriateness of GDP in assessing economic performance and social progress.¹ Their report begins with the pertinent observation that “what we measure shapes what we collectively strive to pursue – and what we pursue determines what we measure.” (p.10) The authors then organise what they call “the case against GDP” into seven basic areas:

¹ Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress, Paris, 2009. www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr/document/rapport_anglais.pdf

1. Distribution – GDP does not tell us how growth is distributed at the household level. The example they cite is the US where GDP has more than doubled over the past 30 years, while median household income grew only 16 percent.
2. Quantity versus quality – GDP measures the quantity of traded goods and services, but not the quality. Money spent on gambling is just as “good” as money spent on books. Traffic congestion contributes to GDP by increasing the sale of petrol.
3. Defensive expenditures – GDP does not distinguish between expenditure that positively increases human welfare (education, for instance), and “defensive expenditure” such as cleaning up industrial disasters or military spending.
4. Real economic value versus borrowed and speculative gains – GDP tells us nothing about the sustainability of economic activity. Financial services add to GDP regardless of whether they are allocating capital to productive investment or fuelling gigantic asset bubbles with speculation.
5. The depletion of natural resources and ecosystem services – GDP ignores environmental problems. Economic activity that depletes natural resources (mining in South Africa) is just as valuable, by GDP standards, as economic activity using natural resources sustainably.
6. Non-market activities - GDP tells us nothing about the value generated by non-market activities – in the household, in the public sector, in civil society, and in the broader ecological systems. In Third World countries, the authors note, this is a particular problem since much activity takes place in the “informal” economy.
7. Social well-being – GDP mostly does not track indicators of social well-being like rates of poverty, literacy, or life-expectancy.

There are many other similar critiques of the GDP metric². Yet, GDP still remains the Holy Grail in most mainstream commentary when assessing how SA is doing, and what needs to change in order to achieve “higher levels of growth”. Clearly powerful interests are vested in the preservation of this highly distorting means of assessing the well-being of our economy and society.

The “economic CODESA” myth

The growth-then-redistribution supporters in SA often recommend a “social compact”, or an “economic CODESA” as the way out of our current predicament. Essentially what they have in mind is a deal between business, labour and government “to get growth moving”. Labour agrees to keep wage increases below productivity gains; business agrees to plough back into SA the increased surplus in job creating investments; and government uses increasing fiscal revenues to:

- First lower the cost to doing business for business (by investing in logistical and energy infrastructure, for instance); and
- Secondly, lower the cost of living for workers by way of social wage expansion (provision of social housing, public transport, etc.).

In the course of this intervention we have noted that, in fact, labour productivity has increased significantly since 1994 in SA, largely as a result of growing capital intensity and the shedding of large numbers of semi- and unskilled jobs, while capital’s share of surplus has grown. However, the

² There is now a growing literature critiquing the GDP metric, with similar if not identical issues raised. A useful short critique is Lew Daly & Stephen Posner, *Beyond GDP. New measures for a new economy*. Demos, 2011. See also Lorenzo Fioramonti, *Gross Domestic Problem. The politics behind the world’s most powerful number*. Zed Books, 2013. Thomas Piketty’s substantial (and runaway publishing success), *Capital in the twenty-first century*, Harvard University Press, 2014, is also relevant here. Its main focus is to debunk the notion that capitalist economic growth necessarily leads in the medium- to longer-term to greater degrees of equality.

increased surplus has NOT, generally, been invested back into job-creating production in SA. The equivalent of some 20-25% of GDP since 1994 has been expatriated by way of dual listings, dividend payments, tax avoidance, transfer pricing, foreign buy-outs, and illegal capital flight.³ This draining of capital and the resulting limitation of fiscal resources will dangerously expose a “redistributive” government in any putative social compact. The sheer scale of reproduced poverty, inequality and unemployment, and the limited fiscal resources to roll out social wage measures will inevitably set up for failure a largely redistributive government that stays clear of transforming the productive economy.

While wholesale trans-nationalisation and financialisation are related in part to the many specific features of South African monopoly capital, it is important to appreciate that they are also global capitalist trends. The belief that a social compact, an “economic CODESA”, will open the way to sustained growth and redistribution in SA rests on the illusion that monopoly capital is still operating in the period 1945-1973 when, in much of the DEVELOPED capitalist world, explicit or implicit national social accords drove post-war reconstruction, resulting in rising living standards for workers and sustained growth. National bourgeoisies in much of war-torn Western Europe, for instance, contributed out of self-interest, by way of high taxation and productive investment, to the patriotic effort of reconstruction and development. However, from around 1973, with capitals from Western Europe and Japan now recovered, and with near full employment within their economies and thus a considerably strengthened working class, along with new sets of problems (inflation, growth slow-down) – European and Japanese capital increasingly sought ways of escaping their respective national compacts and their accompanying “patriotic” responsibilities, by moving their investments to lower-wage and lower-tax destinations.

The switch from neo-Keynesianism to neo-liberalism as the hegemonic imperialist ideology from the late-1970s through to the present is directly linked to these developments. Under the aegis of Thatcherism, Reaganomics, and other variants of neo-liberalism, advances towards social equality in the developed capitalist core have been dramatically reversed as have trade union gains. The 1945-1973 “golden age” of capitalism in the developed capitalist core (Western Europe, US and Japan) has proven to be a relatively brief historical interlude and one that was largely confined to the geo-political “North”.

The South African advocates of a grand “social contract” between business, labour and government as the key solution to our socio-economic crises are confused about both our place and our time. They misunderstand both our geo-political location (as a semi-peripheral capitalist economy in the “South”), and the current historical conjuncture in capitalism’s development (accelerated globalisation, financialisation, and the domination of the casino economy). This is not to say that we should never engage capital whether as government, trade unions, or social movements. We should certainly bring state, working class and popular power to bear on the (diverse) sectors and strata of capital. Through sustained struggle there will be opportunities to leverage agreements and sectoral advances. But the idea that there is a realistic possibility of a grand, all-in, 20- or 30-year social compact with monopoly capital, a deal in which increased investment is made in response to wage restraint, is simply utopian. Our experience over the past 20 years has demonstrated this quite clearly and brutally.

Nevertheless the illusion persists, including within parts of our own movement.

A recent example is provided by Cde Joel Netshitenzhe who sought to give his own meaning to the idea of a second “radical” phase. Concluding a longish Mail & Guardian intervention (“‘Radical’ change is our collective responsibility”, 27 June, 2014) he argues that SA’s challenges require that **“all societal leaders seriously work towards a social compact of common interests...there are historical moments when it is truly ‘radical’ to rise above the false comfort of ideological fundamentalisms.”**

³ Sam Ashman, Seeraj Mohamed & Susan Newman, “The financialisation of the South African economy and its impact on economic growth and employment”, UNDESA/EDD/UNDP International Capital Flows and Financialisation of the South African economy conference. Pretoria, October 2013.

There are four inter-related things (which we have underlined here) to be noted in this, the concluding passage in Cde Netshitenzhe's article:

- It is an appeal to "leaders" – rather than (or rather than also) a narrative of mobilising popular forces as key protagonists of transformation;
- It is an appeal to "all" leaders to work towards a "social compact of common interests" – that is, it is essentially a vision of elite pacting;
- It asserts that the discovery of overarching "common interests" requires that leaders "rise above the false comfort of ideological fundamentalism". While clearly we should not be stuck within dogmatic fundamentalism, the argument here can easily lead to a mistaken belief that social conflict and contradiction are purely the result of subjective intransigence, of ideological tunnel-vision, of a "communication failure". This, in turn, can lead to the illusion of an "ideology-free", "end-of-history", "purely technical" consensus that will solve our socio-economic crises; and
- The intervention consistently places the word "radical" in inverted commas – Cde Netshitenzhe knows very well he is simply paying lip-service to the word.⁶

Cde Netshitenzhe is, of course, not alone. It is a perspective shared with others of a centre-left, social-liberal persuasion. The generally acute commentator, Steven Friedman, is also a consistent proponent of an overarching social pact.⁷ The fundamental weakness of the position lies in its failure to fully recognize the SYSTEMIC nature of our capitalist crisis and the ungovernability of the globalised casino-economy. The position seeks to find common ground across class and other divisions in a "war against poverty, or inequality, or unemployment". But what does it mean to wage a war against "poverty", for example? Are there no vested class interests in the systemic reality of our society that continues to reproduce poverty?

Anti-ANC alliance and anti-state "radicalism" – left (and right wing) versions

At the other extreme, there are now relatively significant but diverse "radical left" ideological currents that, at their best, have produced some important systemic critiques of SA's post-apartheid political economy. We should acknowledge that there has sometimes been a degree of cross-fertilisation between their work and positions adopted by the left within the ANC-led alliance and government (including some positions within this intervention).

These left currents have a strong presence in some universities, and in some of the more effective and progressive NGOs, with a reach into unions and social movements. They are also active in the media and link into a diverse range of international left groupings and networks, including parts of the former anti-apartheid movement.

Attitudes towards the ANC-alliance and government vary from scepticism to outright hostility among these tendencies. Over the past five to ten years the levels of hostility have increased, if anything. Much of this has to do with real weaknesses within the ANC-led movement and government (challenges of corruption, state brutality or indifference, growing social distance from our core base marked by our absence from many protest actions, policy ambivalences and factionalism). These are held up as evidence of the "inevitable sell-out by nationalist forces", etc. In particular, a one-sided (but persuasive) reading of the Marikana tragedy that reduces it to "state violence against workers on behalf of mining capital" has been turned in these quarters into what they regard as a decisive water-shed moment.

Rhodes University academic and leftist Richard Pithouse notes perceptively that: "In the late 1980s and early 1990s shack settlements were often given names like 'Joe Slovo', 'Chris Hani' or 'Lusaka'. This placed the land occupation, and its protagonists, in a national drama. Even when times were

tough there was a clear, and sometimes millennial, sense that this drama was heading towards some sort of collective redemption." (Pithouse, "Marikana, Resolve & Resilience", 26 June 2014, SA Civil Society Information Service, <http://sacsis.org.za/>). In less academic terms, Pithouse is asserting (and not without reason) that in the late 1980s and early 90s popular imagination found inspiration in the symbols and reference points of our national liberation movement. Now, Pithouse notes, many informal settlements around the country bear names like "Marikana", reflecting a growing popular disconnect with our liberation narrative.

Pithouse captures the sentiment amongst much of this left intelligentsia outside of the ANC-alliance when he concludes: "New forces are stirring. Elite nationalism is beginning to lose its hold on an increasingly militant citizenry. Many people are looking for new organisations to advance their interests. Relations to the legal system and electoral politics are increasingly instrumental. None of us knows where this will end. But it is clear that there will be no return to business as usual at the end of this strike [the platinum sector strike]. The deal that carried us through the last twenty years is up."

For many in the left outside of the ANC-alliance, then, we are now into a completely new conjuncture of popular struggle. The 1994 "deal" is over. In short, for Pithouse and many others what is now required is something "radical" (and they are not wrong) – but for them the radical break is not just with monopoly capital and neo-liberal policies, but with the NDR, the ANC-led alliance, an "increasingly illegitimate" ANC-led government, and, indeed, the 1994 "deal" – i.e. our new constitutional dispensation.

There are also right-wing radical populist versions of basically the same narrative – with the EFF representing a hybrid right and left-wing populist "radicalism".

"Split the constitutionalists from the radicals" – the Zille narrative

DA leader, Helen Zille is fishing opportunistically in these muddled waters. Her positioning is neatly captured in a recent interview she provided to Marvin Meintjies. In the course of the interview Zille is quoted saying: "the battle is on in the ANC, it's a huge contestation...the battle within the ANC is: who controls the brand...? Who gets to hold onto the biggest political brand in South Africa's history?...Is it the people who support the National Development Plan and constitution or the people who support the NDR (national democratic revolution)?...Eventually the realignment of politics will happen around the principles espoused in the constitution and the NDP, and our job is to be a catalyst for that, to bring all the people together who support the constitution and the rule of law, genuinely support non-racialism, and support an open market economy with a safety net of social security, and with respect for the separation of party and state." ("In search of a centre that can hold as politics realigns", **Business Day**, 1 July 2014).

Notice how the NDP, the Constitution and the rule of law are placed in one trench, and the NDR in another. Notice also how an "open market economy" is slipped in and assumed to be part of the rule of law and of our Constitution – although you will find no such reference in the Constitution.

All three narratives (the "economic CODESA" call, the "radical" anti-ANC tendencies, and Zille's attempt to divide the ANC-led movement and impose a "free market" reading on the Constitution) in their different ways fail to provide an effective strategic line of march:

The anti-ANC and anti-State "radicalism" at its best correctly recognises that there are deep-rooted systemic challenges that require a radical response. However, these tendencies are inclined to completely eschew the critical task of taking on the struggle for a progressive, second radical phase of the NDR WITHIN the state. They prefer blanket oppositionism and the comfortable "purity" of standing outside. Of course there are many grounds on which the ANC-led movement and the state can and should be subjected to both internal self-criticism, and external critical engagement. But

when opposition to the ANC-alliance and state becomes the defining feature of this “radicalism” (as it increasingly has become) the prospects for mutual influencing and joint campaigning are lost.

To justify these political and tactical positions, their “radical” critiques and their organisational interventions (which are largely of an entryist kind) tend to be focused more against the ANC-alliance and government, than against monopoly capital. This “radicalism” is unable, as a result, to offer sustained organisational and institutional direction on how to embed real radicalism effectively. The unifying thread that unites it (opposition to the ANC-alliance and state) is liable to quickly fragment into competing groupings each seeking, through entryism, to opportunistically benefit from popular discontent.

It is a point that is sometimes conceded from these quarters, see for instance Patrick Bond:

“For some, Marikana was potentially the breakthrough event that independent progressives long sought, one that could reveal more graphically the intrinsic anti-social tendencies associated with the ANC-Alliance’s elite transition from revolutionaries to willing partners of some of the world’s most wicked corporations. Such a narrative was indeed the one promoted by the otherwise extremely fractured South African left (...) Yet, here again, where was the coherence, organisational and ideological, that could render this a cumulative and defining force?” 4

It is symptomatic that Bond laments the lack of “coherence”, but is unable to provide an explanation for it. It is our view that the “radical” anti-ANC alliance left tendencies (with considerable support from the mainstream media), have hidden their diversity and incoherence behind a blanket anti-state and ANC-alliance oppositionism. This oppositionism (which is often indistinguishable in its content from anti-majoritarian centre-right-wing positions) becomes a mask concealing the reality that this “radical left” is really an agglomeration of tendencies, ranging from Trotskyist sects, through social movement and NGO civil rights groups, moderate social democratic syndicalists, business unionists and even proto-fascist populism. In the absence of a coherent positive programme of action, anti-state oppositionism becomes the glue. Tactical differences with the mainstream left within the Alliance are elevated into principled reasons on which to split organisations. Fomenting intra-COSATU divisions becomes more important than taking on the class opponent. The possibilities of building broad (if diverse) left unity on the programmatic basis of a second radical phase of our national democratic revolution are squandered. The anti-Alliance and anti-state radicalism ends up dismissing the entire post-1994 trajectory, as an “inevitable sell-out”.

Netshitenzhe, on the other hand, correctly appreciates the importance of the 1994 democratic and constitutional breakthrough, and the importance of defending it. However, along with many others, he misreads the nature of the 1994 negotiated breakthrough and, on the basis of this misreading, seeks to achieve a “second CODESA”, this time on the socio-economic front. The political and constitutional breakthrough of 1994 was only achieved through the transformation of the relative balance of forces through decades of struggle. Moreover, the CODESA of the early 1990s was not an “elite pact” (or, perhaps we should say, it was not only an elite pact). Until April 1993 and the mass uprising in protest against Cde Chris Hani’s assassination, the apartheid regime and its National Party, sought stubbornly to prevent the final constitution from being drawn up by a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of a non-racial, one-person, one-vote election. They hoped to lock SA into a constitution drawn up precisely in an elite pact at CODESA itself. In order to achieve this outcome, the regime waged a low intensity conflict strategy in the midst of the negotiations process, targeted at breaking the organic connection between ANC negotiators and our mass base. Thousands of South Africans were killed in the midst of the negotiation period.

4 John S Saul & Patrick Bond, South Africa, the present as history – from Mrs Ples to Mandela & Marikana, Jacana, 2014, p.237 & p.238)

The apartheid regime failed to achieve its key strategic objective in the constitutional negotiations only because it was out-manoeuvred both at the negotiating table and on the ground. It is important that we do not allow a revisionist reading of the 1994 democratic breakthrough to blind us now into believing that all problems can be resolved through “enlightened leadership”, and that “radical” socio-economic transformation can be “delivered” to a passive citizenry on the basis of a gentlemen’s agreement between monopoly capital, organised labour and government.

In summary

The context and content for a second radical phase of the NDR that we have sought to develop in this intervention:

- Acknowledges the radical nature of the first phase – the political and juridical defeat and abolition of white minority rule represented in the 1994 democratic breakthrough and ensuing constitutional dispensation. Unlike the anti-ANC alliance radicals (and contrary to Zille’s hopes), we are not ambivalent about or rejectionist of our post-1994 constitutional dispensation. It marked a radical break – but in order to advance, deepen and defend the first phase of the NDR, we need now to advance on a radical second phase. We therefore reject the attempt by Zille (and others) to counter-pose support for the Constitution and a radical second phase of the NDR.
- This radical second phase of the NDR requires that we break from the notion of a “delivery” and purely “redistributive” state. This means re-building popular activism and collective self-empowerment through a well-rooted and campaigning Alliance that is with the people in their daily struggles.
- We also need to consolidate a democratic, developmental state that is strengthened by and strengthens the popular strata. This requires a state that develops a different relationship with working class communities. It also requires consolidating strategic unity, long-rang planning, and discipline within the state – grounded, precisely, in the imperative of advancing a second radical phase of the NDR.
- It is not a question of now waiting for a second radical phase of the NDR. Many important elements of it are already present in policies and active programmes. However, these need to be consolidated and a higher degree of strategic discipline needs to be ensured across the state, our ANC-led alliance, and within a popular mass base. Critical to achieving this is, precisely, the consolidation of a unifying and collective understanding of the context and content of a second radical phase of the NDR.

We hope that this document, through fostering comradely debate and discussion, will contribute to this outcome.





2

Radical economic transformation in the interests of all, but primarily the poor

“As the Freedom Charter recognised more than 60 years ago, the problem with monopoly capital is not... that it is white but that ultimately it is monopoly capital.”

(Editorial, *African Communist*, 1st Quarter 2017, Issue No. 194)

Over the past few months an increasingly shrill, factional and narrow black economic empowerment (BEE) voice has been heard. The ANC's correct 2012 Mangaung National Conference call for a second radical phase of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) is being dumped down in these quarters to a narrow question of radically increasing private black (or rather African – another relatively new backsliding development) capitalist ownership of the economy. Since at least the late 1920s the Communist Party in South Africa has recognised that the economic, social, political and cultural empowerment (or rather the collective self-empowerment) of and by the African majority lies at the heart of the struggle for national liberation and socialism in South Africa. The current imperative of a second radical phase of the NDR is precisely grounded in the fact that this collective national emancipation remains largely unfulfilled, notwithstanding some important advances since 1994.

In our post-apartheid South Africa, inequality, poverty and unemployment are still massively marked by race (but also by gender, class and geographical location). Indeed, while it is important to remember that income (and even more asset) inequality between black and white remains extraordinarily and disgracefully high, class formation within the African community post-1994 has resulted in intra-African inequality becoming the main contributor to our extraordinarily high Gini coefficient income inequality measure.

A number of independent academic studies and, indeed, the ANC-led government's own assessments, have noted this reality. According to one representative academic study: “From a policy point of view it is important to flag the fact that intra-African inequality and poverty trends increasingly dominate aggregate inequality and poverty in South Africa. Race-based redistribution may become less effective over time relative to addressing increasing inequality within each racial group and especially within the African group”. (Trends in South African Income Distribution and Poverty since the Fall of Apartheid, 2010). An HSRC study found that growing intra-African inequality contributed some 33% to overall inequality in South Africa, while intra-white inequality contributed 21%.

Expressed in less academic language what this is saying is that the assumption that enriching a select BEE few via share-deals, or measuring empowerment progress in terms of direct individual black percentage ownership of the JSE, or (worse still) looting public property in the hands of state owned corporations in the name of broad-based black empowerment is resulting in the very opposite – increasing poverty for the majority, increasing racial inequality, and persisting mass unemployment.

One reason for the failure to drive a thoroughgoing, radical transformation of our political economy after 1994 is, precisely, attributable to the impact of the narrow BEE currents that are now, once more, surfacing voraciously.

A number of things need to be remembered about the evolution of BEE in South Africa. In many respects, narrow BEE was not the invention of the national liberation movement, but of white capitalist circles in the early 1990s. Realising that an impending non-racial democracy would deprive monopoly capital of its reach into the state, established capital sought strategically to pre-emptively co-opt into their shareholding ranks a stratum of blacks and particularly those with likely ANC-linked political connections.

Pre-emptive moves by established capital to transfer some white share ownership to Africans started in the early 1990s, years before the ANC ever began speaking of BEE. In 1990 the National Sorghum Breweries was sold. In 1993, the Afrikaner-dominated conglomerate, Sanlam sold 16% of Metropolitan Life to a black empowerment consortium, New African Investments Limited (Nail).

Indeed, references to “empowerment” (not yet even “black” empowerment) were only first included in ANC policy documents in the run-up to its December 1997 Mafikeng conference. In the 1997 economic policy document the ANC stated:

“National Empowerment Policy: The ANC should clearly articulate a National Empowerment Policy that will focus on those who have been historically disadvantaged and particularly black people, women, youth and the disabled and rural communities. The empowerment process must constitute part of a more radical and profound change in social relations. Changing ownership and workplace relations are part of this wider process of empowerment. Within the National Empowerment Framework government should establish a National Empowerment Fund which must lead to the stimulation of saving, shift people from the informal to the formal sector, and from predominantly retail to more manufacturing SMMEs.”

Like the SACP’s 2014 Going to the Root discussion document, this 1997 ANC policy statement correctly locates the question of “empowerment” within the overall imperative of a “more radical and profound change in social relations”, including workplace relations. In 1997 a National Empowerment Fund was seen as a means of stimulating saving, and not as an instrument for leveraging indebted BEE share-holding.

Likewise, the ANC document seeks to shift SMMEs towards productive (and job creating) manufacturing activity away from an excessive focus on retail. All of these are fundamentally correct strategic perspectives which have since been consolidated in further policy development – with the emphasis on broad based BEE, for instance, or with the current objective of fostering productive, hands-on, black industrialists. Unfortunately, in practice, many of these good intentions on paper have been eroded by a hungry black parasitic stratum and, also, by established capital which prefers the lesser evil of co-option of politically connected personalities rather than any thorough-going transformation of our political economy. The evocation of “white monopoly capital” by the likes of [the defenders of the Guptas], or the Gupta media ironically plays directly into this co-optation agenda. As the Freedom Charter recognised more than 60 years ago, the problem with monopoly capital is not... that it is white but that ultimately it is monopoly capital. The extraordinary levels of oligopolistic domination of South Africa’s economy date back to the late 19th century. The mining-energy-finance monopoly complex lay at the heart of the development of South Africa’s colonialism of a special type, and its persisting dominance of our economy has resulted in the chronic challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality, rural underdevelopment, and the suffocation of small and medium business.

Darkening the pigmentation of monopoly capital is not the issue. But apart from the failure to contribute to the structural transformation of our political economy by the narrow individual BEE ownership project now being advanced aggressively from certain quarters, there are other deeply negative consequences of this trend. We have already noted the drift into a narrower Africanism from these quarters. This is partly an internal ANC right-wing reaction to Guptisation (“why should non-Africans

be the principal beneficiaries of political favouritism and state capture?”). But even where the more conventional formula is invoked – “blacks in general, Africans in particular” – what is really at play is “blacks in general, Africans in particular, and me and mine specifically”.

This emergent comprador and parasitic capitalist stratum has a very limited sense of solidarity. Much of the inner turmoil within the ANC has its roots in this reality. Factionalism and electoral slates tend to have little to do with principled programmatic differences, and everything to do with individual enrichment.

For many decades the SACP has recognised the centrality of the all-round self-emancipation of the black majority in the struggle for social justice and, indeed, socialism. For as long as South Africa remains a capitalist-dominated society, there is no earthly reason why capitalists in our country should be overwhelmingly white (and male). As much as the deracialisation of the economy and creation of an African capitalist class is important, for the SACP the struggle is mainly about rolling back and progressively abolishing the oppressive chokehold of monopoly capital over our society. This requires many initiatives not least an increasing emphasis on social (not private) ownership, and on the values of solidarity. This must include the consolidation of a progressive, democratic, developmental state (and not the factional looting of our state owned enterprises and development finance institutions); and the fostering of collective, social entrepreneurship (and not dog-eats-dog individualism) in the context of a solidarity economy...

There are encouraging signs that across the ANC and our broader Alliance, there is a growing determination not to be bullied by those who conceal their personal self-enrichment agendas behind lofty appeals to “black economic empowerment”. We must continue to expose these fraudulent agendas. But we must also give substantive content in theory and practice to real alternatives. Let us advance a genuine second radical phase of the national democratic revolution.



What do we mean by the second radical phase of the NDR and within it radical economic transformation?

(SACP 13th CCC 20th Plenary Session, June 2017)

Introduction – a second radical phase of the NDR

After a prolonged revolutionary struggle, the 1994 democratic breakthrough in South Africa finally abolished the institutions of white minority rule with their origins in centuries of colonial domination. This radical rupture laid the basis for a democratic dispensation within a progressive, non-racial constitutional order.

Since 1994, the SACP has been actively campaigning for a new push, a second radical phase of the struggle to advance and deepen the national democratic revolution (NDR), on the basis of the bridgehead of the 1994 democratic breakthrough.

We have consistently argued that without urgently opening up this new front of struggle, without an uninterrupted second radical advance, the gains of the first phase would be threatened; the liberation credentials of the ANC-led movement could be increasingly eroded as memory of the anti-apartheid struggle receded; popular power might be dissipated into passive expectation of state delivery, or individualistic consumerism, or, at best, fragmented into thousands of localised and sectoral protest actions. Any undue pause, we have further argued, would allow South African monopoly capital, historically sheltered behind colonial and white minority rule, to re-group. All of these likely tendencies, we said, would leave the structural legacy of apartheid colonialism and the socio-economic crises affecting the majority of South Africans largely intact.

In 2017 it is obvious that these concerns have been substantially correct.

More concerning still, faced with these challenges, the ANC, the leading formation in our liberation struggle over the past decades, a political movement that has enjoyed overwhelming electoral support since 1994, is, itself, now in serious and possibly irreversible decline.

This was the context in which the SACP contributed to and welcomed the ANC's 2012 National Conference resolution for "a second radical phase of the NDR". Unfortunately, having taken this important resolution, there was little appetite or interest at first from within much of the ANC itself to provide any substantial content to, let alone active organisation and mobilisation for a second radical phase.

Over the past year, however, there has been a sudden but largely opportunistic resurrection of the idea of "radical economic transformation". Unfortunately, this belated evocation of radical transformation

has typically been associated with the most reactionary, private rent-seeking elements within our movement. They have appropriated this slogan demagogically as a distraction from the increasing exposure of their own parasitic looting of public resources. This looting is carried forward by way of well-organised networks of patronage, coordinated through a strong strategic presidential centre that straddles both the constitutional state and a parallel shadow state.

From a wide range of progressive comrades within the ANC and alliance, from stalwarts and veterans of our movement and armed struggle, even from those democratic forces historically opposed to, or suspicious of the SACP, there has been a growing recognition of the role the SACP has played, working closely with all democratic forces, inside the movement, inside the state and in broader society, in exposing and in fighting both state capture and liberation movement capture. More than ever, the SACP has a critical, vanguard role to play in providing real content to the imperative of a second radical phase of the NDR - not just in theory, but above all in mass-based practice.

What are the critical organisational tasks in this context? How should the ANC-alliance be reconfigured to respond to these challenges? Is reconfiguration even possible or desirable? In taking forward this role, if the SACP is to be credible and serious about dealing decisively with the cancer consuming our movement, we need also to examine self-critically what lessons we can learn from the recent past. What role might we have played unintentionally in creating the crisis?

Is the strategic concept of an NDR itself inherently flawed? Are national liberation movements inherently “bourgeois-democratic” in nature? Worse still, once in power after two decades or so, are national liberation movements bound to degenerate? Is the current fragmentation of our own liberation movement inevitable (and therefore irreversible)? These have long been the arguments of an anti-ANC left, as well as of liberal forces who regard the “national question” as irrelevant.

To help to answer these questions, one important step is to re-visit the historical roots of our strategic perspective of a radical NDR.

1. The two tendencies within national liberation struggles – the origins of the strategy of a radical NDR

The Comintern and the National Question

The SACP is not a newcomer to the idea of a radical national democratic revolution. In fact, the strategic concept of an NDR was developed within the international communist movement nearly a century ago.

Soon after the 1917 Bolshevik October Revolution in Russia, the question of the relationship between anti-colonial nationalist struggles and emerging Communist Parties in largely peasant-dominated societies arose. At the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920, there was a “Commission on the National and the Colonial Question”, in which Lenin and the Indian communist, MN Roy, played leading roles. In his report back to the Congress on the commission’s work, Lenin wrote:

“We have discussed whether it would be right or wrong, in principle and in theory, to state that the Communist International and the Communist parties must support the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries. As a result of our discussion, we have arrived at the unanimous decision to speak of the national-revolutionary movement rather than of the ‘bourgeois-democratic’ movement.”

We can see here the origins of the communist strategy of supporting NDR struggles in colonial and semi-colonial conditions. As Lenin goes on to explain, the idea of a “national-revolutionary movement” was advanced to distinguish between two diverging tendencies within national liberation struggles – the one national-revolutionary, the other a “bourgeois-democratic” reformist tendency: “if we speak of the bourgeois-democratic movement, we shall be obliterating all distinctions between the reformist

and the revolutionary movements. Yet that distinction has been very clearly revealed of late in the backward and colonial countries...”

The Comintern urged Communist Parties in countries like India and China to work closely with, and to help radicalise, the “national revolutionary” tendency in the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist national struggles.

Monopoly capital and industrialisation in South Africa

When the SACP (the CPSA as it was then known) was launched in 1921, the socio-economic context was different to that prevailing in societies like India and China which had overwhelmingly peasant majority populations and strong feudal features.

At that point, for nearly half-a-century, much of the southern African region had already been plunged into a massive process of monopoly capitalist-driven transformation. Rapid industrialisation, centred on the diamond fields around Kimberley and then the gold fields of the Witwatersrand, drew huge flows of monopoly capital from the imperialist centres. There were major investments in mines, and also in rail and port infrastructure connecting the mining hinterland to the colonial ports. The Anglo-Boer war, the largest armed conflict of its time, forcibly consolidated disparate states, establishing a single geographical political entity, the Union of South Africa, under British imperial hegemony. In 1910, the Union of South Africa became a semi-independent British dominion under local white minority rule.

Above all, this massive capitalist-driven industrial revolution transformed the hard-pressed African peasantry and traditional African societies within the borders of the new Union of South Africa, and, indeed increasingly throughout the southern African region, into impoverished labour reserves. Earlier colonial wars of dispossession had laid the basis. Now an active and violent process of proletarianisation was launched - that is to say, the forced expropriation of independent means of production, forcing hundreds of thousands and eventually millions of rural migrants on to the capitalist labour market on extremely unfavourable terms.

Money taxes were imposed upon these labour reserves to intensify the coercion of African workers into waged employment. At the same time, perverted forms of “traditional” patriarchal rule were consolidated as apparatuses of indirect colonial rule. Residual communal land tenure and subsistence farming were also conserved at the margins. This further lowered the wage costs for mining monopoly capital of hiring migrant black labour. The costs of reproduction of the male migrant labour force (caring for the young, the injured and sick, and the elderly) were increasingly carried by rural African women – the basis for the persisting triple (national, class and patriarchal) oppression legacy of African women in our country.

The early Communist Party in South Africa

Inspired by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, socialists in South Africa formed the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) in 1921 as an affiliate of the Communist International. The CPSA sought to build working class solidarity between white and black workers in a struggle against mining monopoly capital. Already by 1924 the majority of the CPSA’s non-racial membership was African. However, at first the CPSA did not recognise the interconnection between the class struggle for socialism and the national question in South Africa.

It was the 6th Congress of the Communist International in 1928 that mandated the CPSA to pursue a national democratic struggle as a “stage” towards a “workers’ and peasant republic”. This mandate called for the recognition that mobilisation around the grievances and aspirations of the nationally oppressed majority of South Africans was the critical motive force in the struggle for socialism against

a double colonial reality – the continued hegemony of British imperialist capital and emergent national monopoly capital buttressed by an “internal colonialism” (white minority rule).

While acknowledging that the 1910 Union of South Africa had accorded a degree of political independence to South Africa under white minority rule, the CI correctly argued that South Africa remained an essentially COLONIAL reality. This is how the Executive Committee of the CI in its Resolution on South Africa put it:

“South Africa is a British Dominion of the colonial type. The development of relations of capitalist production has led to British imperialism carrying out the economic exploitation of the country with the participation of the white bourgeoisie of South Africa (British and Boer). Of course, this does not alter the general colonial character of the economy of South Africa, since British capital continues to occupy the principal economic positions in the country (banks, mining and industry), and since the South African bourgeoisie is equally interested in the merciless exploitation of the negro population.”

The same CI resolution instructed South African communists to pay particular attention to the still small emergent black, nationalist formations, with the ANC specifically mentioned. This new strategic line was adopted by the CPSA in 1929. Today, the SACP is criticised in some ANC quarters for paying “too much attention” to the ANC, but we have been paying considerable attention to the ANC for many decades, and we do not apologise for it.

2. The two tendencies in the South African National Liberation Movement

Through much of the first half of the 20th century the ANC held a broadly progressive, but essentially liberal-reformist perspective on the nature of the national struggle. In the late-1940s and through the 1950s, with rising mass and working class struggles, the ANC increasingly moved towards a more radical approach. The Freedom Charter, adopted in 1955 by the Congress of the People, marked a decisive step in the radicalisation of the movement’s strategic vision.

However, it is important to remember that within the ANC there have always been tensions between both more narrowly nationalist and more bourgeois reformist tendencies on the one hand, and more progressive left-leaning tendencies on the other. For these reasons, the ANC was, for instance, not at first able to formally adopt the Freedom Charter. Its eventual adoption by the ANC in 1956 provoked a subsequent split in the shape of the PAC – which rejected both the non-racial (the inclusive African nationalist) vision of the Charter, as well as its commitment to the common ownership of the mineral resources of our country, arguing that this was a “foreign Communist” idea.

The 1962 SACP programme, “The Road to South African Freedom”, reaffirmed the revolutionary national-democratic nature of the South African struggle. In characterising apartheid South Africa, the SACP’s 1962 programme introduced the important concept of “colonialism of a special sort”, (CST), referring to the fact that, while South Africa continued to be a semi-peripheral economy subordinated to the interests of imperialist capital, the dominant colonial power (exercised through white minority rule) occupied the same spatial reality as the nationally oppressed black majority.

The crucial ANC 1969 Morogoro Conference, which marked a critical turning point after the major strategic defeat suffered by our movement in the mid-1960s, in effect, reaffirmed Lenin’s distinction between national struggles that were bourgeois-democratic, and those that were national-revolutionary. The Morogoro “Strategy and Tactics” document clearly associated the ANC with the national-revolutionary line of march:

“our nationalism must not be confused with chauvinism or narrow nationalism of a previous epoch. It must not be confused with the classical drive by an elitist group among the oppressed

people to gain ascendancy so that they can replace the oppressor in the exploitation of the mass."

The Morogoro Conference argued that the viability of a radical NDR in South Africa was made possible by two factors:

1. A global conjuncture – "The struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa is taking place within an international context of transition to the Socialist system..."; and
2. The fact that in South Africa, compared to most other societies embarked on national liberation struggles, the working class here was the overwhelming majority – "The perspective of a **speedy progression** from formal liberation to genuine and lasting emancipation is made more real by the existence in our country of a large and growing working class whose class consciousness complements national consciousness."

This strategic vision of "a speedy progression" from formal liberation to a radical NDR in many ways inspired the great rolling waves of semi-insurrectionary struggles from the mid-1970s, through the 1980s and into the early 1990s. It was a strategic vision that helped the ANC once more reclaim its hegemonic leadership role within the broader South African struggle.

These semi-insurrectionary mass struggles were the decisive factor in forcing the hand of the apartheid regime into finally engaging with the liberation movement in negotiations. However, the radical NDR vision was to be challenged from within the ANC itself at the very moment that the 1994 democratic breakthrough became imminent.

The collapse of the Soviet bloc played a major role in this revisionist turn. It was no longer easy to proclaim, as the ANC had done in 1969, that our struggle was taking place in a global context marked by an inexorable forward march, "within an international context of transition to the Socialist system".

But if the global context had become less favourable for a radical national democratic revolution, this, surely did not negate the imperative of still pursuing that path. Nor did the global situation change the objective class realities in South Africa – in which the employed and unemployed proletariat constituted the overwhelming majority, and in which the massive domination of monopoly capital would make formal liberation relatively meaningless without a radical advance.

Indeed, notwithstanding its general optimism, the Morogoro Strategy and Tactics document introduced an important note of caution:

*"We do not underestimate the complexities which will face a people's government during the transformation period nor the enormity of the problems of meeting the economic needs of the mass of the oppressed people. But one thing is certain – in our land this cannot be effectively tackled unless the basic wealth and the basic resources are at the disposal of **the people as a whole** and are **not manipulated by sections of individuals be they White or Black**".*

(In our current reality it is important to note the "or Black").

In short, Morogoro, while recognising likely difficulties, did not see these as reasons to abandon the strategy of a radical national democratic revolution.

The 1994 democratic breakthrough...what next?

But abandonment is exactly what started to happen within prominent circles within the ANC in the early 1990s.

It is interesting to contrast, as an example, the key messages that the SACP and the ANC respectively sought to advance in the immediate aftermath of the landslide ANC-led alliance electoral victory in April 1994. The message from the SACP's Central Committee was clearly spelt out on the cover of the May 1994 issue of *The African Communist*: "A luta continua!" – "the Struggle Continues!", accompanied with an editorial elaborating on this perspective along with photographs of the winding thousands-strong queues outside voting stations to make the point that the democratic breakthrough was itself mass-driven.

This was in contrast to the front cover of the ANC's official publication at the time *Mayibuye*, which carried the relatively demobilising headline "Free at Last!", and a cover photograph of the Union Buildings and an air-force jet formation flying overhead at the inauguration of President Mandela. The accompanying *Mayibuye* editorial begins: "The moment has arrived. Liberation. Real change. National Democratic Revolution. Call it what you may." It then goes on to envisage a modest, largely state-driven, top-down process: "Now is the time to make good the election pledge... In June, allocations from the budget will be decided upon. A modest beginning can then be made..."

From the very outset of the post-apartheid period then, there was a determined ideological and strategic thrust to reassert a revisionist, liberal-reformist vision of the NDR.

3. The first post-apartheid decade-and-a-half

The first phase, we argued, was constituted by the radical breakthrough in the 1994-1996 period. This radical breakthrough saw the abolition of the institutions of white minority rule, the achievement of one-person one-vote representative democracy, and a progressive constitution drawn up through an elected constituent assembly.

Our position in the mid-1990s (a position we continue to believe was correct) was that a second radical phase of the NDR should have begun IMMEDIATELY, using the bridge-head of the 1994-1996 breakthrough.

In arguing for a radical approach in the mid-1990s, the SACP was well aware that an adventurist "great leap forward" was not possible. The rolling back and relative stagnation of liberation movement advances within our own region; the 1989-1991 collapse of the former Soviet bloc; and the ensuing unchallenged US-led imperialist global domination had created an unfavourable correlation of forces internationally.

However, the landslide 1994 ANC electoral victory; the unextinguished popular and working class struggle traditions at the time that had made the negotiated transition possible in the first place; and the fact that South African monopoly capital, given its deep complicity with white minority rule, was off-balance, created relatively favourable domestic conditions for radical advances.

These would necessarily include, as the SACP argued in 1995, a socialist orientation within an ongoing NDR – building capacity for, momentum towards, and elements of socialism in the present. This perspective was encapsulated in our slogan: "Socialism is the future – Build it Now!" In other words, we understood the ongoing NDR and struggle for socialism in the new conditions to be essentially a struggle for "revolutionary-reforms", of progressive transformational measures. This strategic position also meant that we understood that socialism was not a "second stage" to be pursued (that is to say, delayed) only "once the NDR was completed". Neither the NDR nor socialism were "events". This was a strategic perspective of a relatively protracted struggle, a "war of position", on the terrain of a constitutional, majority-rule democracy to contest and achieve radical transformation in all key sites of power. This required "going to the root" of the deep structural legacy of colonialism of a special type.

Unfortunately, during the Mandela-Mbeki administrations an alternative strategic orientation was adopted, which the SACP characterised as the “1996 class project”. Despite contestation from within the ANC-led alliance, it became the dominant strategic line in the ANC and in government.

This strategic line, influenced strongly by a range of Western think-tanks, borrowed liberally from the perspectives of the first Bill Clinton administration (1993-1997), and later adopted by Tony Blair and most of Western Europe. This was essentially a drastically watered-down social democratic stance, calling itself the “Third Way”, and embracing neo-liberalism, financialised globalisation, a technocratic state, with “modernised” centre-left (often alternating electorally with more or less identical centre-right) political parties led by “electable” centrist politicians enjoying strong support from key sectors of capital. This is what some have described as “the extreme centre”. Barack Obama was possibly the last major representative of this current.

The ongoing global economic crisis that began in 2007 in the US as a financial crisis has shaken the assumptions of this project to the core. The economic crisis has now also become a crisis of political representation. Centrist, “Third Way” politics is now off-balance in many advanced capitalist societies, with the popular rejection of “establishment” politics in the US (the election of Trump), in the UK (Brexit), and across much of the EU.

The two decades of “Third Way” political hegemony has witnessed growing inequality both on a global scale as well as within dominant capitalist societies. Even within developed capitalist economies, trade union and welfare advances have been eroded, large sections of the working class, middle strata and professionals now find themselves unemployed or in precarious work.

Governing Third Way political parties (along with their centre-right colleagues) in the imperialist centres have typically supported NATO, and have been actively complicit in the military destabilisation of vast stretches of the Middle East and North Africa. War has been waging in Afghanistan since the 1980s, and in Somalia since the 1990s. Along with climate induced crises, and structural adjustment programmes resulting in economic collapse, imperialist military interventions have now produced the largest flow of internal displacements and of cross-border refugees since the end of the Second World War. Contrary to most mainstream media, by far the largest numbers of refugees and desperate economic migrants are located within third world societies, including South Africa. However, there have also been major flows of migrants and refugees into Europe and the US.

De-industrialisation, growing employment precariousness, deepening inequality and the flow of migrants has been the terrain on which populist, rhetorically anti-establishment, right and extreme-right wing political parties and personalities have surged electorally within the US and many European countries on the basis of xenophobic, anti-immigrant demagoguery.

But there have also been important left-leaning regroupings either from inside of established centre-left parties, or through the formation of new movements, with the latter sometimes working with existing communist and radical left parties. Many of these movements take their direct inspiration from the diverse, anti-neoliberal, centre-left and radical left movements that swept through most of Latin America in the 2000s.

South Africa obviously has its own specific features, but it is possible to recognize many similar crises of representation dynamics at play that began to come to a head in the 2007-2009 period in our own country – the loss of credibility of the neo-liberal Third Way – “the 1996 class” - project; the emergence of a narrow populist nationalist right tendency; and the imperative of a regrouping of the left. However, in South Africa, these dynamics began to play themselves out largely WITHIN the ANC and ANC-led alliance.

4. How did we get here? The Polokwane moment

After 1994 there were consistent efforts from within the ANC and ANC-led movement to counter the neo-liberal Third Way project (or the “1996 class project” as the SACP dubbed it). These efforts came to a head in the “Polokwane” conjuncture of 2007/8. One of the organising perspectives of the upheaval that occurred at this point was the assertion that the “ANC (or the Alliance, in another version) is the strategic political centre” – and, not, therefore the state-presidency where Mbeki’s technicist approach had sought to locate it. At face value, and for many, this assertion of the strategic primacy of the ANC-led movement represented an attempt to reassert the democratic and mass-based, movement character of the ANC and its alliance.

However, in practice the Polokwane moment involved a marriage of convenience (or, perhaps, an unholy alliance) of the broad left, anti-neoliberal bloc with demagogic forces for whom the assertion of the ANC as the strategic political centre was a move to displace incumbents in the state with their own, in order to advance an even more aggressive parasitic, rent-seeking agenda. These latter forces identified patronage-based mobilisation within the ANC as the soft underbelly from which to capture strategic positions within the state to advance their parasitic agenda.

In other words, there were two very distinct understandings of what was meant by the “ANC as the strategic political centre”.

The first Zuma administration (2009-14)

In the first Zuma administration (2009-14) there was a relative balance of forces between the divergent agendas that had come together in a marriage of convenience at Polokwane. In some sectors (health with a major shift on AIDS, trade and industrial policy, state-led infrastructure spend, recalibrating competition policy as a means to leverage economic transformation, a greater emphasis on vocational training, etc.) space was opened up for progressive advances, including developing a better working relationship between the state and social movements (the social movement campaign for anti-retroviral treatment being the most obvious case).

However, in terms of sustaining and re-building the ANC-led movement’s capacity to mobilise the key motive forces, these and other positives in state deployment, coincided with the weakening of COSATU, partly as a result of the global economic downturn and resultant retrenchments. There was also a loss of momentum on the SACP side in terms of active working class and popular mobilisation (a failure to sustain a very successful financial sector campaign for instance). Deployment advances in some sectors noted above, however, were always (and surely deliberately) held in check by other deployments in the 2009/14 administration.

These checks-and-balances involved transactional deployment trade-offs between three tendencies (putting it very schematically) – a more left-leaning tendency; a more narrow BEE tendency; and a more centrist grouping, including many from the Mbeki project who had remained in ANC/state leadership positions (the National Development Plan was essentially the product of this last-mentioned tendency). This last-mentioned tendency was cultivated as the outward-looking hegemonic project seeking to appeal to business and foreign investors, while the more left-leaning and narrow BEE tendencies competed for support within the movement and among popular strata. There was also considerable, largely tactical, instability within the two last-mentioned groupings, resulting in the NUMSA split from the alliance on the one hand; and the belated expulsion of Malema from the narrow nationalist parasitic tendency on the other.

Important advances were made in the 2009 administration, but the constraints noted above meant that the structural problems within the political economy were not radically and systemically addressed.

Where there was significant massification of programmes – the 17-million social grants reaching some 10 million beneficiaries, for instance, or the largest roll-out of ARVs in the world - critical gains were achieved. The floor of poverty was lifted and there have been significant and rapid gains in life expectancy. While these were absolutely essential interventions they were not inherently transformative.

In other cases, where there were significant budgetary allocations – in the major state-led infrastructure build programme, for instance – much of it (in the outgoing Mbeki administration) had been spent on non-transformative vanity projects (2010 FIFA World Cup stadia and other related infrastructure – the Gauteng Freeway Infrastructure Programme, the King Shaka International Airport and Dube Tradeport, the Gautrain). In the first Zuma administration, with the establishment of a Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission there was progress in re-orienting state-led infrastructure spending into a more coordinated and integrated approach. However, weaknesses and parasitic activities in key SOCs (notably, but not only, Eskom and Transnet), and in different spheres of government constrained the potential impact. The massive over-spending at Zuma's Nkandla homestead symbolised both the continuation as well as the personalisation of the vanity project phenomenon.

As for social infrastructure, the mass low-cost RDP and other subsidised housing programmes (some 4 million houses) have largely entrenched apartheid spatial patterns by building working class housing in peripheral locations far from work and other resources. This has served simply to reproduce working class marginalisation and black poverty – as well as a deeply skewed property market. The Gauteng signature housing project, the mixed-income Cosmo City development, was targeted at both subsidised housing for the working class and poor, and mortgaged houses for the emergent black professional and other middle strata. However, only a small percentage of the original beneficiaries/owners are still staying in their houses as a result of the enormous cost of transport because of its location. The subsidised houses are being sold at far below the cost to the state of their construction as the original beneficiaries move out. There is also wide-scale bank repossessions of mortgaged homes in Cosmo City, with auctioning-off sales on average fetching 30% less than nominal market value.

Other potentially critical pillars of a radical second phase of the NDR – like the state-led industrial action programme - have simply not received the scale of funding that would enable a qualitative step-change. In some cases, the worst ravages of neoliberal-driven de-industrialisation and job losses have been halted, and some level of employment stabilisation has remarkably been achieved in a sector like clothing and textiles – indicating what could be achieved more widely if there was sufficient political will and resourcing.

Public employment programmes – the Expanded Public Works Programme and the Community Work Programme – while achieving relative massification (at around one million work opportunities a year), are, given the extraordinary levels of unemployment, nowhere near the scale required and envisaged in Chapter 3 of the National Development Plan. The effective resourcing of these programmes should aim strategically to move us towards the objective of the universal right to work (as envisaged in the Freedom Charter) as well as a socialist de-commodification of the very notion of work.

As for Land Reform and Restitution, again the required financial and human resources allocated have been woefully inadequate, and, even worse, there has been a strategic muddle. At best land reform is little more than a handful of dispersed projects, many of which collapse within a matter of years as a result of the failure to follow up making land available with concerted state technical, market and financial support. There has also been a failure to appreciate that, while access to rural land is key, the most significant land crisis is now urban.

In short, none of the potentially radical, “game-changing” sectoral measures have been sufficiently resourced or championed politically, or effectively conceptualised strategically, to ensure the kind of mass-scale, transformative impact required. This is not to say that, for instance, a transformative

infrastructure build programme, state-led re-industrialisation, public employment programmes, and land reform (all of which can and should be connected) could all have necessarily been scaled-up simultaneously and equally. The trouble is - none have been.

Constraining serious radical transformation has been the deliberate “balancing of forces” within cabinet and key departmental and SOC deployments. Throughout the first Zuma administration, Treasury remained firmly in the grip of a neo-liberal orientation. The SACP’s partial policy victory at the ANC’s 2009 Polokwane conference for the establishment of a state planning organ was watered down into the National Planning Commission, basically outside of state structures. And, consistently, throughout the 2009-14 administration, the president kept a very close control over the key departments in the criminal-justice sector.

These factors, coupled with the impact of the global economic crisis, meant that popular discontent and a proliferation of township and other protests increased. It was in this context that the ANC at its 2011 Mangaung national conference resolved on the necessity of a “Second Radical Phase of the NDR”. As already noted, no attempt was made from the side of the ANC to give meaning and content to the idea of a “second radical phase” – an inability reflecting the ideological paralysis caused by different currents and tendencies within the movement.

5. Post-2014 – State Capture takes off

The fifth democratic administration, and particularly since December 2015, has seen the dramatic destabilisation of the pre-existing, but always unstable, post-Polokwane relative co-relation of forces within the ANC and government. Essentially this has been the result of a more determined, more reckless, but relatively well coordinated, and well-resourced drive by a networked parasitic-patronage faction connected to the narrow BEE tendency and actively supported from the highest echelons of the ANC and state.

Since 2014 we have seen a greater boldness and recklessness from this networked tendency, associated with:

1. Accelerated rent-seeking activities based on state capture
2. Increasing signs of a parallel shadow state and parallel movement
3. Creeping authoritarianism and ambitions for a more presidential system; and
4. An attempt at developing a pseudo-radical, populist ideological platform to cover for these

Accelerated rent-seeking based on state capture

This networked parasitic patronage faction is held together by the plundering of public resources, rent-seeking activities that have focused considerably on parasitic relations with SOCs – not to privatise these entities, but to milk them and direct their billions of rands of procurement into private corporate and even individual pockets. Some of the current parasitism is directed at building war-chests to subvert the ANC’s December 2017 national conference. The continued association with and defence of the Guptas, and the attempt to prolong the CPS social grant contract are, in part, an aspect of the war-chest agenda.

A parallel shadow state and movement

In order to advance this agenda, but also to deal defensively with the growing exposure and popular outcry against it, there has been brazen abuse of the presidential deployment prerogative into sensitive institutions (SARS, SSA), and particularly into institutions involved in criminal investigation and prosecution – NPA, Hawks. However, while these deployments have delayed, or buried critical

investigations and prosecutions, the calibre of those deployed and the resulting inner factional turmoil (for instance in SSA or SARS) has further deepened the crisis. With obvious presidential support, a parallel state has developed – SARS, the Hawks, the NPA are unleashed against Treasury; a rogue unit in SSA is launched as a factional arm within the ANC and ANC-led movement. Attempts to bypass cabinet are becoming more common – the Zwane bogus “cab memo” being the most obvious example. On the policy front, shadowy presidential and ministerial advisers from outside of the state and even the movement are brought in and act parallel to constitutional structures in the university crisis, on the SASSA matter, on nuclear policy, etc.

Growing authoritarianism

Linked to all of the above are growing inclinations to authoritarianism and presidentialism. Nostalgia for military-style, top-down command and control is openly expressed.

In July 2016 President Zuma said: “If it were up to me and I made the rules, I would ask for six months as a dictator. You would see wonders, South Africa would be straight. That’s why if you give me six months, and allow Zuma to be a dictator, you would be amazed. Absolutely. Everything would be straight. Right now to make a decision you need to consult. You need a resolution, decision, collective petition, Yoh! It’s a lot of work.”

If opposition to Mbeki at the 2007 Polokwane Conference was centred on the struggle against over-centralisation within the Presidency, we are clearly now in a much worse situation. “Imperialist conspiracies”, “regime change” threats are invoked in order to justify this dangerous drift – as if the accusers were not themselves involved in a “silent coup” against a democratically-elected government, and as if they were not actively betraying South Africa’s democratic national sovereignty.

Assassinations of ANC and alliance cadres often go unsolved, and an emerging pattern of intimidation is apparent (most recently the theft at the Constitutional Court offices; and threatening behaviour at the former Social Development DG’s private residence, etc). There is an attempt to emulate a Putin style, authoritarian, low-intensity democracy, with meetings reported between this faction and their counterparts in Russia.

However, both the sometimes amateurish calibre of state/ANC elements involved in these activities, as well as the broader socio-political-constitutional setting in SA (a stronger independent media, growing judicial confidence in holding the line, a powerful monopoly capitalist sector, and still relatively strong trade unions) often result in the early exposure of these activities, which does not make them any less sinister. What it does underline is that South African “civil society” has a much greater depth and resilience, whether from the capitalist or popular sectors, than Mugabe’s Zimbabwe or Putin’s Russia.

The growing authoritarianism at the top has its complementary counterpart at the regional and local levels. Thuggish militias, funded by provincial grandees, operate in several provinces, including the North West (where they wear T-shirts branding themselves as Bang Fôkols), in Mpumalanga, and KZN. They are used to break-up constitutional meetings of the ANC and its alliance partners, and may also be involved in more sinister activities. There also appears to be collusion between these forces and elements within the SAPS, with attacks on community leaders and activists going untouched.

A diversionary populist ideological platform

In the face of growing public exposure of their misdeeds, there have been a number of ideological interventions from the parasitic-patronage faction.

On the one hand, these have involved setting up (or attempting to suborn existing) ideological apparatuses – the SABC under Hlaudi; The New Age (whose “business model”, like most Gupta-

operations, consists in funding through parasitism on SOCs, the SABC, and endless advertorials from the premier league); and the recent Bell-Pottinger operation, using social media with “fake bloggers” and “Twitter bots”, linked to pop-up “think tanks”,... etc.

Other institutions with a popular base among the alienated and largely a-political have also become stop-overs. These are platforms that include evangelical sects and celebrity prophets who convey blessings upon factional personalities in deep trouble and a curse upon their “enemies” in events that are organised as “press conferences” (see, for instance, Ntlemenza’s “press conference” at the Incredible Happenings Church)

Much of the ideological content from this leading faction is purely demagogic, eclectically tailored to the presumed interests of the audience (the National House of Traditional Leaders was promised an improbable “pre-colonial land audit” ahead of any “radical land reform”).

Generally, the stance of the parasitic-patronage network has been a populist anti-intellectualism (“clever blacks” are disparaged.) For the first time in many decades, the ANC no longer has a journal of ideological discussion and debate.

However, over the past several months there has been an attempt to craft a more coherent ideological platform, evoking black and particularly narrow African nationalist themes and the notion of “radical economic transformation” (in the process narrowing the until recently forgotten Mangaung resolution calling for a “radical second phase of the NDR”).

This move seems in large part to have been motivated by the hugely negative impact on the parasitic-patronage network of the growing revelations of their subordination to and complicity with the Gupta-family. The Gupta connection clearly has zero positive resonance either with the mass base, or even with the many local aspirant rentier factions who resent the favouritism bestowed upon (or extracted by?) the Guptas...

Ironically, given its attempt to cast itself in radical Africanist terms, much of the content and narrative for this ideological platform appears to have been developed by the UK-based PR firm, Bell-Pottinger, working on behalf of the Guptas. Adopting the same victimhood strategy used by Zuma in 2007, the Guptas’ propaganda machinery has sought to portray the multiple revelations of wrong-doing on their part, and the belated closing of their banking accounts, as a conspiracy directed against them by “white monopoly capital” working in tandem with Treasury. (Of course, since this did not square with the narrative, there was silence from these quarters when in February 2017 the Chinese Central Bank also shut down the accounts of a Gupta-related company, VR Laser Asia involved in a dodgy deal with Denel.)

Over the past several months this parasitic-patronage faction has sought to re-calibrate its public positioning somewhat. While the Gupta family (and the networks left behind by its erstwhile Bell-Pottinger PR agency) clearly lurk in the background in many cases, there has been an attempt to downplay links in this direction and adopt a more radical sounding, Africanist posture. However, “radical”, in these quarters, is largely rhetorical and is almost entirely focused on advancing narrow black elite accumulation. This very narrow version of BEE evokes “blacks in general, and Africans in particular”, but in effect, it’s about “ME and MINE specifically”. The reduction of “radical economic transformation” almost entirely to a question of private black corporate “ownership, control and management of the economy” side-lines any notion of SOCIAL OWNERSHIP, or of POPULAR control, or of WORKER management.

We are told that companies directly controlled by blacks only own 10% of the JSE, but what is left unexplained is: if individual blacks owned 80% of the JSE how would that impact on the triple (and racialised) crises of unemployment, poverty and inequality? The same applies to the constant

references to “WHITE monopoly capital” – if it became black monopoly capital would that change the lives of the majority of South Africans? The fudging of class is carried through in the way in which correct statistics are presented but abbreviated – for instance, we are told “White households earn five times more than black households”. Shamefully, that’s true, but notice what is missing – the word “average”. The StatsSA finding from which this is drawn says: “The AVERAGE white household earns five times more than the AVERAGE black household”. That reality is, of course, absolutely scandalous and is the source of social instability. But when you omit the word “average”, you omit CLASS and wilfully omit the growing class divisions and diverging class interests within the ANC itself. The top 10 percent of earners in South Africa earn as much as the remaining 90 percent, but half of that 10 percent is now black.

The major ideological counter-offensive that the parasitic-patronage network has attempted to deploy, thus far, has been the fig-leaf of a narrow Africanist, “black first, land first” variety. However, more recently, there have also been attempts to advance a more Marxist-flavoured narrative as an alibi for parasitic plundering.

One voice in this latter regard... characterises the current key dynamic within the ANC and state as a clash between different fractions (so-called “classes”) of the bourgeoisie. “On the one side is white monopoly capital and credit-based black capitalists...who have amassed wealth through black economic empowerment. Opposing them are black capitalists, who have taken advantage of state-tenders”, we are told. Although the analysis needs considerable nuancing, there is some truth in this characterisation – the SACP has referred to the two (sometimes competing, but often overlapping) emerging black fractions of the bourgeoisie as a “comprador” bourgeoisie (so-called “credit-based bourgeoisie”), largely dependent upon and subordinate to established domestic and global monopoly capital, on the one hand, and a parasitic bourgeoisie milking public resources, on the other.

This voice’s principal error is that, in advocating for “radical economic transformation”, it takes sides with the one faction: “In so far as the tender-based capitalist class has begun its war against the dominant white monopoly capitalist class, it has to be encouraged”, we are told. The problem with this pseudo-Marxist analysis is that the very basis for the existence of these “tender-based capitalists” is their massive attack upon and consequent erosion of the two key potential working class and popular struggle weapons critical to the transformation of a political economy dominated by monopoly capital – the post-1994 democratic state and particularly its SOCs, and an ANC national liberation movement still (but for how long?) enjoying majority electoral support.

Of course the SACP does and should support using state procurement and targeted tendering to ensure re-industrialisation through localisation, beneficiation, de-concentration, and the promotion of PRODUCTIVE black industrialists, etc. These are important pillars of any second radical phase. But the current Gupta-type dominant fractions of “tender-based capitalists” are NOT productive industrialists, they are a parasitic-patronage network supported from the highest echelons of the state and ANC. Key levers of radical transformation – Eskom, Transnet, Prasa, SAA, SASSA and even critical ideological/cultural institutions (the SABC) – have been massively weakened through parasitic robbery. And the post-Polokwane entry-point into these critical strategic sites of power has been through control over the ANC by way of whole-sale patronage networks that buy membership and rig internal ANC elections, which is actively leading to the demise of the ANC’s popular support.

It is important that the imperative of a radical second phase of the NDR is rescued from the demagogic clutches of the parasitic-patronage network, and the SACP has a critical role to play in this regard. What follows is a shortened and updated version of the SACP’s discussion document, “Going to the Root”.

6. A second radical phase of the NDR – Going to the Root

Despite major redistributive efforts on many fronts since the 1994 democratic breakthrough (including 4-million subsidised “RDP” houses; 17-million social grants; 7-million household electricity connections, etc.) crisis levels of unemployment, poverty and inequality persist. These crises are strongly marked by racial, gendered, and geographical factors – the poorest of the poor remain African rural women.

Why the persistence of these crises? Is it because of poor government “delivery”? There are certainly many weaknesses in government capacity, and there is a need for significant improvement – but in relative international terms we have carried out a major redistributive programme. Is it because of weak growth? If we “grow the cake” then can we do better? But even during the previous decade of sustained growth in the post-apartheid period, the triple crisis persisted.

Clearly the problems are STRUCTURAL, they are embedded within the systemic features of our political economy. Growth along the same trajectory simply reproduces all of the deep-seated problems. This is why any solution has to be “radical” – that is to say, we have to go to the root of the problem. There has to be a STRUCTURAL transformation.

So what are the origins of this problematic, deeply-rooted structural legacy?

The problematic, systemic features of our political economy are rooted in South Africa’s colonial and white minority-rule history

The capitalist industrial revolution in South Africa in the late 1800s did not emerge “organically” from within South Africa, but was built around the mining revolution, which combined:

A high **dependency** on (and subordination to) foreign finance capital and technology (primarily because quite quickly the capitalist exploitation of both the diamond fields and the gold reefs required deep level extraction); and

- A massive **reserve army** of “cheap labour” – drawn from “native reserves”, and, indeed from throughout southern Africa.

Although much has changed in South Africa since the late 19th and early 20th centuries, these core features of the capitalist industrial revolution in our country have produced (and re-produce) systemic features, what is sometimes called a “path dependency”, which still persist today:

- Extremely high levels of private **monopoly capital** domination, especially in the mining, banking and energy complex – and, therefore, a relatively weak manufacturing and SMME sector;
- The semi-peripheral **subordination of SA within the global capitalist value chain** – despite its very early industrialisation, SA has been locked into a growth trajectory as an exporter of low-value, un-beneficiated natural resources and as an importer of technology and capital goods;
- **Spatial inequalities** – Not only was the political formation that emerged in 1910 as the Union of South Africa a semi-peripheral political economy serving a distant imperialist core, but the massive reserve army of labour was sourced from and reproduced in local (and regional) rural peripheries – principally the “native reserves”, later bantustans. This “internal colonial” relationship played out between peripheral labour reserves and industrial mining and port centres. With the advance of the 20th century, it was also (and increasingly) reproduced in the core/periphery relationship of urban African townships on the distant outskirts of South African towns and cities.

- **Patriarchal oppression** – patriarchal values and oppression are found in most societies, but these were acutely intensified for the majority of women in South Africa by the “indirect rule” system through which the mining houses and successive colonial and white minority regimes exerted control over labour reserves. This was done through the simultaneous conservation and perversion of a “traditional” patriarchal subordinate apparatus – kings, chiefs and headmen, appointed by colonial and white minority rule authorities. Pre-capitalist societies in South Africa had both regressive patriarchal and progressive communal, democratic features. The latter we still honour today, partly in words (izimbizo/makgotla; ubuntu; masakhane; communal land, etc.), but also in the many every-day practices of social solidarity and cooperation in working class communities (like stokvels). Successive colonial and white minority administrations preserved the worst authoritarian features and entrenched these in a system of indirect rule which later morphed into Bantustan authorities. Still today one-third of South Africans, mostly women, live as quasi-citizen-subjects under one or another form of chiefly authority. It was through this indirect rule system that girls, young men acting as “herd-boys”, and especially women were forced into bearing the brunt of the reproduction of “cheap” (for the mining houses) migrant male labour – through child-rearing, care for the sick and injured, and the elderly, while scratching the barest of livelihoods from survivalist farming. On the mines themselves, the mining houses also reinforced labour discipline through an ethnic “boss-boy” system.

The lumpen patriarchy that is so much in evidence in contemporary South Africa, the extraordinarily high-levels of violence against women and children, male-based gangs, shack-lords, quasi-trade union formations like the Five Madoda, and, perhaps, we should now add the political militias and goon squads like the North West province’s “Bang Fokols” all have multiple origins. But the de-humanising impact of decades of colonially-distorted “traditional” patriarchy should not be underestimated. Nor should we forget that around one-third of South African citizens are also “subjects” of patriarchal authority in the former reserves. The majority of those affected are women.

- **A segmented labour force** – although the institutionalised segmentation of the labour force, with racially defined job reservation, labour preference areas and the like, has been abolished, the working class still remains stratified along racial lines. Artisanal and skilled positions are still disproportionately occupied by whites, and low skilled work almost entirely performed by blacks. A massive reserve army of labour has long been the core feature of South Africa’s capitalist economy and of its relationship to the rest of the southern African region. High levels of unemployment have been disguised in rural dumping grounds and in township “informality”, giving rise to migrancy by annual, seasonal and daily, contract labour, and the inhumane treatment and casual discarding of workers. These largely racialised patterns continue with 6,9 million workers unemployed and many more in precarious work. In addition, economic crises and urban and rural poverty in our wider southern African region have effectively transformed countries like Zimbabwe, Swaziland and Lesotho into labour-exporting reserves (“Bantustans”) for post-apartheid South African capitalism by way of a huge flow of economic refugees.
- **Education and training** – the reproduction of both class and racial inequalities was deliberately perpetuated through decades of colonial and apartheid education and training policies and practices. In the pre-1948 (pre-apartheid) period, the reproduction of class and race inequalities in the education system was largely by way of neglect of the African majority. However, in response to growing capitalist labour market needs for a semi-skilled labour force, the apartheid regime introduced the Bantu Education system. While the inferior character of this education system is often and correctly criticised, the scale of the roll-out is sometimes forgotten. When the National Party took power in 1948, the average black child spent only four years in school, and only a quarter of black children of school-going age were enrolled as pupils. Under the Bantu Education system the number of places for black pupils increased rapidly. But

the racial inequalities in terms of government spending were massive, and with the growing intake of black pupils the per capita inequality increased. In 1953 government spending per African pupil was 14 per cent of that for each white pupil, by 1968 it had declined to 6 per cent.

This significant expansion of education for blacks was not, of course, due to any enlightened philanthropy on the part of the apartheid regime. It was a strategic response to the growing demand for more literate, more numerate semi-skilled labour, while professional training and qualifications in the expanding but limited black universities ("bush colleges") was intended to be reserved for staffing "homeland" administrations in the Bantustans.

Since 1994, at a formal institutional level we now have a single, non-racial public education system and important progress has been made in terms of achieving near universal school enrolment. However, in practice, vast inequalities persist throughout the education system, and these serve to reproduce race and class inequalities.

- **Unsustainable environmental destruction** – Pre-colonial African societies lived in relative harmony with their natural environment. Everywhere, capitalism's voracious need for ever-expanding growth has resulted in the destruction of the metabolic relation between societies and nature. Colonialism in the era of capitalism was particularly destructive of both human lives and wider nature as it embarked on an often genocidal process of primary accumulation. In South Africa, colonially-orchestrated, capitalist-driven industrialisation was based on an especially ruinous path - mineral extraction that has plundered our non-renewable national wealth at huge cost to human health, and to the environment, of which the current Acid Mine Drainage crisis is but one symptom. Formerly cheap and abundant coal resources have also locked our energy system and wider productive economy into an excessively carbon-intensive path.

All of these systemically-interlinked legacy features of our political economy point to key RADICAL STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION features that need to be the critical pillars of a second radical phase of the NDR.

They also point to why the National Question and therefore a NDR strategy remain central features of our struggle, not least our struggle for a socialist South Africa.

7. Key pillars of a second radical phase of the NDR

Many of the sectoral policies that are elaborated below are familiar. Many, although not all, are found in both existing government and ANC policy programmes. It is pointless for the SACP to invent wholly new policies for the sake of appearances - however there are several important emphases:

1. Many sound programmes are poorly implemented, or are under-resourced, or are ineffectively integrated with other policy programmes.
2. Even more seriously, the now run-away state capture train is deliberately implicated in creating policy incoherence, as narrow personal agendas are pursued, and clientelistic transactional trade-offs are made in order to oil the wheels of patronage regardless of the overall impact.
3. Above all, our policy programmes must, individually, and collectively, have a strategically transformative character – getting to the root of the underlying structural distortions of our society that were noted above. Often, government policies lack a clear transformative agenda.

Defence, consolidation and expansion of democratic social ownership and control of our country's major resources and enterprises.

In the present context of the massive state-capture onslaught on our State Owned Enterprise Sector – the defence and consolidation of our SOC's sector is an immediate priority. There is already a relatively extensive state-owned sector in our country including: all of South Africa's ports and the great majority of our rail system are owned and controlled by Transnet and its subsidiaries; the majority of electricity in South Africa is generated and all of it is transmitted by Eskom; our major airports are owned and controlled by ACSA (now once more 100 percent publicly owned); the majority of our air-fleet is owned and operated by public entities – most notably SAA; with the passing of the Mineral Resources and Petroleum Development Act, all mineral resources were placed under public ownership with trusteeship vested in the state; the broadcast spectrum is controlled and regulated by the state; the Department of Public Works' Property Management Trading Entity has a property portfolio some seven times larger than the next largest property portfolio (that belonging to the JSE-listed Growthpoint); the largest investment fund in South Africa is the publicly controlled Public Investment Corporation with over R1,857 trillion assets under management. There are major publicly controlled financial institutions (DFIs) – among them IDC, the Land Bank, the DBSA, and several provincial DFIs, including Ithala Bank in KZN.

As noted above, however, this relative massive publicly-owned asset base, has not been used with sufficient strategic discipline and coordination to drive a second radical phase of the NDR. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the "1996 class project" drove a corporatisation agenda, much of which was intended to prepare key SOC's for privatisation. The corporatisation process gutted much of the historical developmental capacity of leading SOC's. For instance, Eskom and Transnet (formerly Spoornet) were critical training grounds for (white) artisanal training across the economy, this vital capacity now needed to ensure the training of all South Africans has disappeared. There was some partial privatisation (notably SAA, ACSA and Telkom), partly as another form of primitive capital accumulation for a narrow BEE elite.

In the more recent "state capture" period, most of the major SOC's, DFIs and publicly-controlled investment funds have been subjected to aggressive, parasitic raiding in the name of "radical economic transformation".

Which is why the first task is the democratic DEFENCE of the public sector, strategic SOC's, DFIs and public investment funds.

The second task is to ensure that this vast asset base is used with STRATEGIC DISCIPLINE to leverage a second radical phase of the NDR, with the key focus on inclusive growth, job creation, and developmental impact.

A third task is to utilise the state's regulatory powers to expand SOCIAL ownership and control. For instance, instead of using the state's custodianship of South Africa's mineral wealth beneath our soil to leverage "free carry" share ownership for private black-owned companies (as is being proposed), a percentage of mine-shares must be provided as "free carry" to a national Sovereign Wealth Fund, and a further percentage to be allocated to mine-workers – thus fulfilling the Freedom Charter perspective that "the mineral wealth of South Africa belongs to ALL WHO LIVE IN IT".

(Re-) Industrialisation – Some important progress has been made since 2009 with the introduction of the state-led Industrial Policy Action Plans. In particular in the auto and auto-components and in the very challenging clothing and textile sectors. However, if our industrialisation programmes are to have the intended radical, structurally transformative impact, they require significantly higher levels of resourcing. Greater attention needs to be paid to labour intensive sectors, hence the latest emphasis

on agro-processing. Apart from the key task of employment creation within a decent work agenda, our IPAP interventions need to be clearly positioned within a NATIONAL democratic strategy to overcome South Africa's sovereign vulnerability to external imperialist realities, as a result of our historical semi-peripheral location within the global economy. Directly related to this is:

The relative de-linking from dependency upon global imperialist value-chains – through localisation, beneficiation, funding South African R&D; tougher financial flow controls; and a greater emphasis on southern African and sub-Saharan integrated and balanced development.

Spatial transformation (transforming apartheid-colonial space) – through state-led economic and social infrastructural development; integrated urbanisation; township economies; public transport; and strategic land reform. Again this range of interventions needs to be positioned within a NATIONAL democratic strategic perspective. The structural reproduction of racial inequality and class exploitation is directly related to the perpetuation of apartheid-colonial space – now driven largely by the capitalist land and housing markets. Directly related to spatial transformation is the struggle to:

Effect a relative de-linking of working class communities from excessive dependency upon the capitalist market (including the capitalist labour market) – through land reform, sustainable livelihoods, cooperative and social entrepreneurship development, the township economy emphasising the production of use-values for working class communities, public employment programmes, the expansion of social protection measures, progressive moves towards a public work-guarantee scheme (the right to work), imposition of prescribed asset requirements on the financial sector.

When we speak of a **National DEMOCRATIC Revolution** it is important not to forget the second term – DEMOCRATIC. (This is one of the reasons why the SACP continues to insist on using the full Mangaung resolution that called for a "second radical phase of the NDR", rather than the truncated version that has now become popular – "radical economic transformation".)

In the first place, the question has increasingly arisen as to whether the one hundred percent Proportional Representation system in national and provincial elections is still appropriate to achieving effective constituency representation, and whether the PR system in strengthening centralised party leadership control over public representatives, has not been a factor in the state capture crisis.

More importantly, we will not succeed in driving effective structural transformation of our society without mobilised and organised popular power. The first radical phase of the NDR abolished the institutions of white minority rule and introduced a non-racial, one-person one-vote parliamentary democracy. This was an important advance – but the "Democratic" in the NDR refers to a much deeper set of practices of which representative electoral democracy (in whatever form it is organised) is just one part. The Freedom Charter speaks also of organs of direct democracy. In the course of the popular uprisings of the 1980s rudimentary organs of local popular power emerged – self-defence committees, street committees, people's courts.

After 1994 a range of institutions were legislated for and were intended to take forward this rich experience – Community Policing Forums, School Governing Bodies, Ward Committees, and the principle of popular participation in municipal budgeting and integrated development planning. In practice few of these structures have advanced popular participatory democracy – having been captured by the state bureaucracy, or politicians, or middle strata for their own purposes. Why has this happened? How do we revitalise these potentially critical organs of popular power?

Contributing to these challenges has been a loss of the popular movement character of the ANC and the alliance partners. Much of the organisational structure of the ANC and its leagues has been converted into an electoral machine at best, and, at worst little more than parasitic-patronage networks.

The SACP has also lost much of its popular mobilisational momentum over the last 5 or 6 years, and COSATU, on the back-foot in the face of mass retrenchments, has often been consumed with internal battles.

Given these realities, the Alliance has often found itself tailing behind, or even divided, in the face of popular struggles – the student struggles of the past two years being one example, the numerous local “delivery” protests being another.

But a second radical phase of the NDR will not be possible without the effective, strategic unity of a democratic developmental state and effectively organised and mobilised popular and working class power.

Defence of the NDR is also centrally about re-building a DEMOCRATIC criminal justice system and intelligence services aligned to our democratic constitutional values

The parasitic-patronage state capture agenda strategically targeted the criminal justice system and then the State-Owned Enterprises. Working class communities, in particular, live in a state of insecurity, while much of the South Police Service are poorly trained, demoralised and under-resourced. The upper echelons of strategic institutions, particularly the Hawks and the National Prosecuting Authority have been captured by factional parasitic forces, while a dominant but rogue unit within the Intelligence Services has become the key node of the shadow state. The removal of corrupt elements in these institutions and ensuring that the criminal justice system returns to constitutionality and service to the people, is now a key priority of defending, deepening and advancing a second radical phase of the NDR.

8. Socialism in the 21st century

In the late-1980s and early-1990s the SACP played a relatively important international role in keeping the red flag of socialism flying. It was an internationalist responsibility that the SACP at the time well understood. With the Soviet bloc of countries rapidly unravelling, and with once mass-based communist parties in countries like Italy and France losing momentum, and with the historic communist party and trade union left in much of Latin America still reeling from decades of imperialist and military junta oppression, the ANC-led breakthrough in South Africa was one of the few radical popular developments of the time.

The SACP was very much an integral part of this radical breakthrough, a fact that was evident both among popular forces at home and internationally. The SACP appreciated that this imposed an internationalist duty on the SACP to, as it were, keep the red flag (and our very name as a communist party) flying. This meant neither being demoralised nor being in denial about the reasons for the major set-back that the collapse of the Soviet Union represented. As a Party that had from its outset been inspired by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, and that had been closely associated with the Soviet legacy for many decades, we had a particular responsibility both to our own broader movement and to left forces internationally.

In the early 1990s two important interventions were made from the side of the SACP. Our General Secretary at the time, Cde Joe Slovo, published “Has Socialism Failed?” in 1990, and in 1995 the SACP at its Congress formally adopted a new strategic approach to the struggle for socialism – encapsulated in the slogan “Socialism is the Future – Build it Now!”

Slovo’s intervention was translated into a number of international languages, receiving a wide local and international left-wing readership. He acknowledged the important advances made after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in terms of full employment, health care, housing and major industrialisation in a

formerly backward country. He also saluted the selfless assistance rendered by the Soviet Union and its allies to the South African liberation struggle.

Slovo further noted the unceasing anti-Soviet imperialist offensive that had continued unabated from foreign invasions in support of the White Army counter-revolution in the Civil War, through the Nazi invasion in 1941 which resulted in 20 million deaths of Soviet citizens and the destruction of a large percentage of its productive base, through to the Cold War, with the threat of nuclear annihilation compelling a costly arms race burden.

These and multiple other imperialist-driven offensive operations, Slovo argued, contributed to a siege mentality within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), which reinforced other internal weaknesses and deviations, some of which assumed horrific dimensions – notably the mass-scale purges under Stalin, which eliminated millions of people, including much of the cream of the 1917 working class revolutionary leadership. These criminal excesses were halted in the 1950s and roundly criticised as a “Stalinist cult of the personality” at the CPSU’s 20th Congress in 1956.

However, as Slovo went on to argue, the rectification of the Stalinist errors did not overcome increasing economic and bureaucratic stagnation, which eventually led to the peaceful overthrow of the system from the late 1980s by the working class itself.

The thrust of Slovo’s intervention was that it was not socialism that had failed, but rather a socialist project that suffered from a deficit of democracy. He argued that capitalism can survive with or without formal democracy, relying on the threatening whip of unemployment and the bait of consumerism to drive people into alienated and exploited work. However, in the Soviet Union an extensive social wage but without vibrant democracy, including democracy in the work-place itself, resulted in social stagnation and mass alienation. Slovo’s conclusion was that without a vibrant popular and working class democracy, socialism could not thrive.

In further SACP discussions, and particularly in the light of immediate challenges the Party was facing in the post-1994 period, Slovo’s critique of 20th-century “existing socialism” was taken forward. A strong “economistic” tendency in the Soviet system was identified, involving a forced march into industrialisation, and an over-emphasis on developing and “modernising” the forces of production to the detriment of thoroughly democratising the relations of production. This resulted in further problems, the harsh treatment of other popular classes, notably the peasantry, and the attempt to “catch-up” with the West at any cost, with a neglect of the devastation to the environment.

Socialism in the 21st century will need to place a premium on ensuring food security for its people, on sustainable livelihoods, sustainable households and communities, and the sustainable use of natural resources.

The SACP’s 9th Congress (1995) and 10th Congress (1998) built upon and took further Slovo’s perspectives on socialism. In particular, these Congresses decisively broke with the “stage-ist” conception of the relationship between a radical National Democratic Revolution and the construction of Socialism. This break with “stage-ism” was particularly important at a time when the Mbeki-period “1996 class project”, sought to strategically re-define the NDR as essentially about “completing” the capitalist revolution in South Africa, which meant “de-racialising” capitalist ownership and control – but not increasingly abolishing capitalist ownership. The “1996 class project”, used “stage-ism” to argue that, yes, they had no problem with socialism (and therefore with the SACP), but socialism and the SACP belonged to a distant future.

While continuing to assert that in South African conditions a radical NDR is the most direct “route” to socialism, with the slogan “Socialism is the Future – Build it Now!”, the Party committed to injecting

a socialist-orientation into present-day struggle. The argument was that defending, advancing and deepening the NDR requires building capacity for socialism (including, therefore, a class conscious working class), momentum towards socialism (through pursuing anti-capitalist struggles in the midst of the NDR), and even building elements of socialism in the present. Among the elements of socialism to be built in the midst of the NDR, are:

- The increasing de-commodification of basic needs – health-care, education, housing, the environment, culture and information, and work itself. In other words, taking basic needs out of the sphere of the market.
- Transforming the market – the decommodification of key areas of our society does not mean abolishing the market altogether, but rather the rolling back of its empire. To transform markets means intervening with collective social power to challenge and transform the capitalist dominated market-place using active labour market interventions; state procurement leverage; regulatory controls; and effective consumer negotiating forums.
- Socialising the ownership function – by building a strong, democratic public sector; fostering an extensive co-operative and social-solidarity economy sector; ensuring much more effective strategic worker control over social capital (like pension and provident funds).
- Socialising the management function – in the public sector by struggling against bureaucratic aloofness and ensuring greater levels of public participatory engagement; and, in the private sector, ensuring that the management function is not one-sidedly dominated by profit-maximising objectives – by using effective work-place forums, safety committees, etc.
- Democratic planning – both at the central level and in devolved locations where appropriate.

None of these measures in themselves, or in isolation, amount to socialism. All of them are open to being co-opted into the capitalist system. This is why on our terrain of revolutionary-reforms, in the context of contesting all sites of power, the question of momentum and transformative coordination are critical. We must seek constantly to build working class and popular confidence and power. We must seek constantly to advance transformational interventions that place our principal strategic opponent, monopoly capital, off-balance. In short, we must build working class and popular hegemony in all sites of power.

This requires both a vanguard party of socialism and a broad national democratic movement. Which is why we say:

Defend, Advance, Deepen the National Democratic Revolution:

The vanguard role of the SACP!!



4

Now more than ever: The SACP has a leadership duty in the NDR

Towards a discussion at the

SACP 14th Congress on the question of the 'SACP and state and popular power'
(SACP 13th CCC Plenary Session, August 2016)

The August 3 2016 local government elections have emphasised a worrying trajectory of decline in popular support for the ANC. While at 54% the ANC still remains the electoral choice of the majority of South Africans, the gradual decline in support over several past elections and now the precipitous decline across most provinces and in urban as well as rural areas is a sobering indication of a trend. If not addressed, this loss of momentum will accelerate.

It is not, of course, just the electoral results of August 3 that are of concern. These results are symptomatic of broader challenges. They are also less the consequence of opposition parties progressing and rather more the consequence of serious problems within the ANC. These include:

- Systemic money-driven factionalism from top to bottom. The 20 intra-ANC assassinations in the run-up to the elections and the subsequent assassination of another ANC councillor-elect in Tsolo and killings in eThekweni are an indication of just how dangerously sick large parts of our movement have become.
- The decision to run the ANC election campaign around the person of President Zuma also clearly cost the ANC many votes. Opinion polls suggest that President Zuma has a national approval rating in the lower 20% - far lower than that of the ANC itself. Where else in the world would a political party contesting in competitive elections choose to build its campaign around a deeply flawed personality cult?
- Related to all of the above is the endemic corruption in and corporate capture of much of the ANC's institutional machinery. This results in brazen manipulation of internal elections, membership lists, deployments, etc.
- Not since 2007 have we seen such visible signs of division amongst the national leadership and the wilful bypassing of ANC- and cabinet-mandated positions on things like the SABC, SAA, digital migration, nuclear energy, or the "Zwane" task-team on the banks, etc. There is a climate of extreme recklessness in parts of the ANC and in parts of government and across many parastatals.

While successive ANC conferences (and Alliance Summits) have recognized many of these features IN GENERAL (corruption, sins of incumbency, factionalism, growing social distance from our mass base, etc.), IN PRACTICE the ANC national, provincial and regional leaderships have shown little collective willingness or capacity to deal decisively with the issues.



One notable positive feature, however, of this year's local government elections relates to the SACP. While we should not exaggerate, it is surely not inaccurate to assert that alone among the Alliance partners, the SACP has emerged more unified, larger in membership, and relatively active on the ground. Clearly, we have resource constraints and our own organisational capacity is uneven in different localities, but SACP activists played a critical role in many difficult situations, not least in areas which had become no-go zones for the ANC.

At our July 2015 Special National Congress we had already made the following observation:

*"The messages of support that we received from our Alliance partners, the ANC, COSATU, and SANCO at this Congress have all affirmed the great hopes they are placing on the SACP as a Party of theory, a Party of activism, a tried and tested Party of revolutionary discipline...Last week's Alliance Summit acknowledged that ...the SACP is the most stable and ideologically coherent formation within the Alliance. This is a time when the ANC is acknowledging many challenges related to incumbency and the influence of money on internal democracy. This is a moment in which the unrelenting capitalist offensive against COSATU coincides with serious challenges to its unity and strength...**more than ever before, we [the SACP] have a major responsibility...**"*

(Declaration of SACP Special National **Congress** 11 July 2015)

That was just over a year ago. The downward trajectory within the ANC has continued apace since then, and the apparent lack of capacity and will to deal with the systemic challenges are more apparent than ever.

This is the context in which the SACP and State Power Commission must now take forward its work. **When this Commission was first established, following a resolution of our 2005 Special National Congress, the situation was similar in some respects, but also quite different in others.**

In 2005 the SACP (and a more unified COSATU at the time) were embarked in a struggle neo-liberal hegemony within government and the ANC, led by an internal bloc that we called "the 1996 class project". However, in 2005 the SACP was ALSO dealing with an internal reformist wing (perhaps about one-third of our CC at the time) which was closely aligned and actively collaborating with this 1996 class project. In this context, at our 2005 Special National Congress, some districts, notably Nelson Mandela Bay - legitimately frustrated at the side-lining of Party comrades by the 1996 class project-controlled ANC - called for the SACP to stand alone in forthcoming elections on a socialist/Marxist-Leninist platform. (Interestingly, the leading spokesperson for this at the 2005 SACP Special National Congress was Irvin Jim).

The SACP July 2007 national congress dealt effectively with our former internal reformist wing, and the ANC's December 2007 Polokwane National Conference dealt a blow to the 1996 class project.

Post-2007, then, the internal demand for the SACP to stand alone electorally diminished for a time. However, the victorious Polokwane bloc of forces that was ranged against the 1996 class project led by Thabo Mbeki was itself a problematic marriage of convenience. It was composed of a left-wing grouping constituted essentially by the SACP and COSATU, on the one hand, and a rabid tenderpreneur network led by the ANC Youth League, including personalities like Julius Malema at the time. While the SACP/COSATU axis opposed the hegemonic neo-liberal grouping from a principled left perspective, the "anti neo-liberalism" of the ANCYL grouping was essentially an opposition to any limits placed by Treasury on the rapacious looting of public resources. With the inevitable fall-out and growing tensions between different components of the Polokwane "marriage of convenience", internal calls for the SACP to stand independently in elections have once again surfaced, particularly from the YCL and some provinces.

It is important that we understand the similarities and differences between the 2005 and 2016 situations:

- The SACP is no longer confronted with a major 1996 class-project aligned, reformist faction within our own leadership ranks. While there are legitimate **tactical debates and differences** within the Party (for example on the modality in which the Party is involved in elections) these differences are NOT grounded in major strategic divisions, or ideological factions.
- While the beginnings of “Gupterisation” (the flourishing of parasitic behaviour) within the ANC certainly date back to at least the Mbeki era, the degree to which this has now taken hold is seriously more advanced and dangerous. In 2005 the SACP’s **principal** focus in the internal ideological battles within both the Party and between the Party and the ANC/government was against the hegemony of neo-liberalism. The Party advanced a series of **national democratic** programmatic (and institutional) proposals – a democratic developmental state leading re-industrialisation (including beneficiation and localisation); a major state-led infrastructure programme; expansion of vocational training; urban spatial transformation; the transformation of the financial sector, etc. The Party also proposed a State Planning Commission. At its 2007 Polokwane conference the ANC endorsed all of these perspectives, and after the 2009 elections important but uneven progress was made in most of these areas. The unevenness (and deliberate undermining) of progress since 2009 (and particularly since 2014) in these and other areas **has less to do with lingering neo-liberal perspectives (which of course still remain) and much more to do with the mushrooming of rabid corporate capture and parasitic looting.**

The above are some observations concerning the current reality within which the question of the SACP and State and Popular Power needs to be contextualised.

What follows are some GENERAL points of principle regarding state power and elections:

State Power and Elections – five theses

Thesis 1 - State power is critical, but it is not an end in itself.

Thesis 2 - Electoral victories are important, but they are also not ends in themselves.

Thesis 3 - While electoral success is ONE means to achieving SOME influence and leverage over state power, electoral success (whether as a majority ruling party standing on its own, or as part of a coalition, or alliance), does not guarantee effective exercise of state power. Many other factors are at play, these include:

- The institutional culture, capacity and strategic coherence across the range of state and parastatal institutions – including the public sector management cadre and rank-and-file public sector workers. Left-wing electoral mandates can be undermined by a recalcitrant judiciary, or by right-wing generals, or by a Bantustan legacy in the civil service, or by a lack of strategic discipline across the state (see for instance the current tendencies for State Owned Corporation chairs and CEOs to supplant electoral mandates and/or cabinet policy decisions in Eskom in regard to independent power producers, or with ICASA defying broadband access policy, for example.) None of this is to suggest that the state administrative cadre, or the judiciary, or armed forces are inherently conservative, or that transformation of these sectors is not one of the critical tasks of any progressive party (whether it is “ruling” or not).
- Powerful external forces, whether regime change instigators or financial institutions like the IMF, the European Central Bank and ratings agencies can undermine an overwhelming electoral mandate (for instance against austerity - see the recent example of Greece).

- Popular electoral mandates can also be seriously undermined by ruling party/coalition factionalism, ill-discipline, personality cults which, in turn are often linked to:
- Corporate capture of both party political structures/personalities and of state and parastatal organs.

Thesis 4 – the question of state power must not be isolated from the question of **POPULAR POWER** both inside and outside of the state. It is not only capitalist forces outside of the state that have actual or potential leverage and influence over state power. Organised and mobilised popular power outside of the state but also inside of it (for instance, by way of progressive public sector unions) can be decisive in supporting or undermining a progressive ruling party's capacity to govern. At the same time, we need to recognise that popular power is not necessarily progressive – fundamentalist, xenophobic, and right-wing fascist forces have also been capable of undermining or hijacking democratic dispensations by mobilising broad popular strata.

Thesis 5 – **The correct approach for a progressive party to adopt in regard to electoral politics is not a timeless and decontextualized matter that can be deduced abstractly and remain valid for all time.** The specific conditions at any particular time, the particular electoral system, national political traditions and legacies and likely trajectories, and the electoral prospects of a party should all be clearly considered.

In regard to the last issue, for instance, a political party may have little prospect or even ambition of attaining state power in any immediate way through the ballot box, but this does not necessarily mean it should abstain from electoral participation. Before its unbanning in 1950 the CPSA actively contested (and won a few ward elections) in the midst of white-minority rule. The objective was to use the electoral space to mobilise and, as best as possible, popularise CPSA political perspectives. As the EFF's recent electoral positioning has demonstrated, it is possible for an 8 percent party to have an impact on governance. A similar "deal-maker" medium-term strategic electoral role might be considered by the SACP.

In this regard, tactical and strategic considerations need, also, to be contextualised **within particular electoral systems** and political party histories. What works in Brazil or France, for instance, might not work in South Africa and conversely. It is important to understand our own potential advantages and challenges. In Brazil there is a direct election of the president by way of a two-round system. If no candidate wins over 50% of the vote in the first round, the two top scorers in the first round face-off in the second. This has enabled the PT (Workers' Party), currently with around only 17% of national congress representation, to win presidential elections (twice with Lula da Silva and latterly with Dilma Rousseff) by getting a range of centrist, centre-left, and left parties (including the communist party, the PCdoB) to support their presidential candidate in the second round. France also has a two-round electoral system. In a first round in municipal elections, for instance, Communist, Socialist and various Leftist formations might contest against each other. In a second round, where there have been pre-arranged agreements, the left parties will unite in supporting the candidate that performed best from within their ranks. In the recent past, this has enabled the French Communist Party (PCF) to control numbers of municipalities, while supporting Socialist mayors in others.

In South Africa, without a two round dispensation, there is certainly still the possibility of SACP candidates contesting ANC candidates in ward elections, for instance, with a view to forming a post-election ANC/SACP council coalition. However, given the level of tensions and hostility (even assassinations) **WITHIN** the ANC itself in ward candidate list processes, we should certainly not assume that it will be easy to achieve some pre-electoral "gentleman's" agreement between the ANC and SACP. This, of course, does not mean that this strategic approach should necessarily be ruled out.

At the same time, we also need to factor in the internationally unique reality that we enjoy in South Africa as the SACP – the possibility and actuality of **dual membership**, that is the possibility and actuality of South African communists participating as full members in all ANC structures. As we know from concrete experience this also gives rise to many challenges – the danger of being co-opted, of losing our own identity, of being treated as “second class” ANC members if not constitutionally, then in practice. But it also gives a unique opportunity to help to shape and take joint responsibility for the ANC. **Would dual membership survive a situation in which the SACP contested elections independently? It is possible that the situation might deteriorate so seriously within the ANC that the loss of dual membership rights might be a necessary step – even a necessary step for the SACP to play an active role in rescuing the ANC in the medium term. Once more, we are flagging these questions not in order to rule out different options, but in order to provide the basis for seriously weighing up the pros and cons around any tactical and strategic choices.**

Thesis 6 – multi-party elections in societies dominated by monopoly capital present serious electoral campaign challenges for principled progressive parties (and especially for a Communist/Marxist-Leninist party). This is, in part, related to the huge campaign expenses involved in so-called “competitive” multi-party elections in “liberal” capitalist societies.

The US political system is probably the most corporately-captured in the world. Huge sums of campaign money are required for contesting even relatively minor local public office. Indeed, as several academic commentators have noted, the relationship between winning elections and election funding has often become inverted – with the very point of winning elections being to raise more funding in order to win the next elections. Needless to say, this electoral treadmill becomes a major avenue for corporate capture of individuals and of party political machinery.

By June 2016, with the actual presidential elections six months away, Democrat and Republican presidential hopefuls had already spent a combined R10bn (\$700m) in their respective party primaries according to the US Federal Election commission. This figure excluded the hundreds of millions more raised and spent by outside groups supporting different candidates. Clearly, this funding comes largely from the big US corporates (who often hedge their bets by simultaneously funding more than one candidate and both major parties). Bernie Sanders, who ran Hilary Clinton a surprisingly close race from a left-leaning position for the Democratic nomination, managed to challenge to some degree the corporate media and funding boycott of his campaign by using social media and crowd-funding innovations. But, in the end, the corporate-dominated Democratic Party machine marginalised his efforts.

Although election campaign spending in South Africa is not as remotely expensive as in the US, electioneering has become an increasingly burdensome reality. The official spend figure from the ANC’s head-office for the August 3 local government elections is a whopping R380m, this is the figure formally accounted for by the ANC treasurer general. It is a figure that excludes the funding received by many individual ANC personalities and factions with strong ties to the corporate world, some of which would have been spent on the ANC campaign and some of it will have disappeared into private and factional pockets. Mpumalanga premier David Mabuza was provided with the use of an ANC-branded helicopter for 10-days on the eve of the elections and this, presumably, was not included in the ANC’s R380m election budget. Mabuza was also reported to have received a donation of R7.5m and 13 new vehicles from the businessman Robert Gumede (City Press, 31 July 2016).

The DA’s official electoral funding was not much less than that of the ANC. According to a Sunday Times report: “DA officials said its election budget of R350m was likely to be exceeded thanks to private funders.” (July 31, 2016). Some of the DA’s funding, we do not know exactly how much, comes from foreign sources.

What about the EFF? On the evidence of a relatively prominent, nation-wide poster campaign and bearing in mind the logistical costs involved in several large rallies, the EFF clearly also had significant funding. A figure of “not more than R10m” mentioned publicly by one EFF spokesperson is almost certainly an under-statement. However, it is clear that EFF funding was significantly less than that of the ANC and DA, which explains the R30m election campaign debt one EFF leader has mentioned, as well as the EFF’s attempt to tax newly elected EFF councillors 50% of their salaries for the first three months. (In a later section we will explain our analysis of the strategy behind foreign and domestic capital’s drip-feed funding of the EFF.) Apart from the proportional party political allocation made by the national and provincial legislatures, the actual sources of EFF funding are not publicly available. There are, however, occasional glimpses of where some of its funding might be coming from. In a 2015 City Press article, Adriano Mazzotti, an Italian with underworld connections and an associate of the convicted criminal Glen Agliotti, admitted that it was he who donated R200,000 to enable the EFF to register as a political party ahead of the 2014 national elections. In the same article Mazzotti declined to answer whether he was also assisting Julius Malema settle his R18m liability with SARS (City Press, 29 April 2015). Malema’s association with Mazzotti clearly dates back to the period when he was still ANC YL president.

There is a further highly problematic feature of these hundreds of millions of rands spent by South African political parties in the local government election campaigns. It is money diverted from productive and developmental investment into consumables with built-in redundancy – posters, media advertising in the major monopoly-controlled outlets, T-shirts mostly imported from outside, and razzmatazz mass rallies. In short, this is politics as spectacle in which the monopoly-controlled media-advertising complex reaps millions with little or any developmental impact. (For useful studies focusing on the US in this respect, see Robert W McChesney and John Nichols, “The Bull Market. Political Advertising”, *Monthly Review*, vol.63, April 2012; and Mary V Wrenn, “Surplus Absorption and Waste in Neoliberal Monopoly Capitalism”, *Monthly Review*, vol.68, July-August 2016 – both available on the *Monthly Review* website <http://monthlyreview.org>)

In short, the increasing Americanisation of South African electoral politics:

- Further opens up our political system to massive corporate capture;
- Weakens national sovereignty by way of foreign funding of South African political parties;
- Creates a significant electoral entry barrier to any principled, anti-monopoly political party or electoral platform;
- Feeds into the factionalising of the ANC and the undermining of its formal electoral mandate;
- Diverts ANC and Alliance energies, resources and focus from campaigning and organisation directed at the actual challenges facing popular strata (unemployment, crime, household indebtedness) into a narrow electoralism; and
- Disproportionally favours a pro-monopoly, anti-working class political party like the DA.

For all these reasons the SACP firmly supports:

- **Tighter regulation to ensure full transparency in party political funding.** The SACP certainly has every interest in ensuring transparency in party political funding, regardless of whether the SACP decides to participate independently in elections or not. But the ANC also needs to realise that it is in its own interests to ensure transparency is introduced, since donations to the ANC are often captured by individuals or factions, and since lack of transparency is a major pathway into corporate capture. In particular, foreign funding of South African political parties for election purposes needs to be outlawed.

- **The signing into law of the Financial Intelligence Centre Amendment Bill.** This Bill was passed by parliament early in 2016 but has still not been signed into law by the President. Amongst other things, the Bill seeks to strengthen financial scrutiny of politically influential persons. This and other measures to deal with money laundering and corruption is an important means for addressing corporate capture and for safeguarding our electoral system.

The role of the SACP in elections since 1994

Since 1994, the SACP has been active in every election through contributing to the ANC election manifesto (beginning with the 1994 RDP, in which the SACP played a leading role), in electoral campaigning both under the ANC banner and also independently in our own right, and in the ANC electoral list processes (of course with varying degrees of success). This post-1994 electoral stance by the SACP has been possible because of the internationally unique reality of **dual membership** as we have already noted in an earlier section. SACP members are also ANC members and many serve in leadership positions throughout the ANC. It is important to remember that the dual membership formulation is not the result of some backroom deal, but a reality forged over many decades in which Communists have played a leading role in building and defending the ANC.

The SACP's post-1994 electoral stance was also informed by our continued programmatic commitment to pursuing a radical national democratic revolution. Which brings us back to our strategic Theses 1 and 2 flagged above – state power is not end in itself, nor is winning elections an end in itself. We cannot have a narrow focus on state power and elections without locating the question of state and popular power within the more strategic question: power for what objectives? In the South African context this immediately raises the centrality of a radical NDR.

The continued validity of a second radical phase of the NDR

COSATU comrades prepared notes for a recent SACP/COSATU bilateral which included the following observation:

"Accepting that the SACP has chosen the NDR as the South African Road to Socialism...the question must be raised as to how can COSATU work to popularize the SACP's road to Socialism and position the SACP as the socialist government in waiting..."

(COSATU, 'Notes for a Bilateral Meeting with the SACP' June 2016)

While this observation was well-intentioned it betrays a problematic assumption. Certainly, the SACP's core strategic purpose is to be a vanguard anti-capitalist force for socialism within the wider context of popular democratic struggles. But surely the SACP must not understand itself as "in-waiting". The dangers of this "in-waiting" characterisation are several:

- It implies that the SACP hasn't (or shouldn't) assume any governance responsibilities in this "stage". Conversely, it would suggest that where we DO have a presence in governance, we are opportunistic hitch-hikers taking a free ride on the NDR but with an entirely different agenda. (This is something that the liberal media constantly taunt us with: "Who gave you a mandate to be in government?" – as if SACP members have not been members of the ANC since the 1920s)
- The idea of the SACP as a "socialist government in waiting" can easily (but surely unintentionally) take us back to what the 1996 class project sought to do, namely marginalise the SACP in "this stage", saying, in effect: "Yes, we agree, socialism is the future...but build it THEN" (with "then" understood to be some impossibly distant utopian future).



- The “in-waiting” can encourage, on the side of the party, a narrow elite “socialist” vanguardism, typical of left-sectarian cliques. This kind of vanguardism stands critically aloof from the realities of the day, confident that its day will come. As we said, as the core theme of last year’s Special National Congress, the SACP must take responsibility for the NDR. In the wake of more recent events this is surely more relevant than ever before.

Against mechanical stageism – the NDR is NOT a “first stage” with socialism a “second stage”

Since at least our 8th National Congress in 1995 where the slogan “Socialism is the Future, Build it Now!” was first officially adopted, the SACP has sought to break with the notion of “two-stageism”, asserting that the NDR

- It is NOT a “first stage”, with socialism a “second stage”;
- The NDR is NOT a “detour” but, in the current global and national reality, an NDR and socialism are deeply inter-twined;
- Indeed, the NDR is NOT even best understood as the “most direct route” to socialism. This still implies that the NDR is a “road” (i.e. a strategy) while socialism is the “destination” (i.e. the goal). This still has the shadow of stageism hanging over it, as well as the danger of imagining there is some inevitability about the relationship between the NDR and socialism (“our day will come – the inevitable advance of the forces of production are making it so”)
 - It might imply that socialism is an “end state” – rather than itself a complex transitional period characterized by many contradictions, advances but also likely retreats, that will require: an ongoing national democratic defence of the socialist project – without which socialism can be reversed (note how Cuba and China both defend their socialist advances and aspirations with their own versions of democratic patriotism)

The ANC does not own the NDR

In advancing the thesis that now more than ever the SACP must assume leadership responsibilities not just for socialism **but also for the NDR**, we are NOT arguing for a “go it alone” SACP approach. We must be clear that advancing, defending and consolidating the NDR requires a broad popular movement against imperialism and monopoly capital. The SACP is not, and should not aspire to be, the sum total of such a broad popular movement.

On the other hand:

- While the ANC, historically, has sometimes been the most important organisational form for this broad movement - the NDR is NOT reducible to, or simply identical with the ANC.
- There were periods in the 1920s, for instance, when the ICU was, in practice, a more effective radical national democratic movement than a rather respectable and often dormant ANC. Often suppressed from official ANC histories is the existence, in the 1930s, of an **Independent ANC working closely with the CPSA**, which, again, proved much more capable at that time than the formal ANC itself in organizing the working class and rural poor. There are many other historical questions of this kind. For instance, was the UDF a more effective NDR mass formation than anything we have since post-1994?

We need to understand that the ANC does not have some God-given right to eternally lead the NDR. We need to recognise that at different times during its nonetheless generally proud and heroic existence, the ANC has been largely missing in action. In acknowledging these realities, we better

prepare ourselves for posing the difficult and painful questions of our time:

- **Can the ANC still lead the NDR? Is the ANC in a terminal downward spiral? Can the ANC be revitalised? Or will the ANC suffer a major break-up?**
- **Do we need a re-configured Alliance? And if so, what actually do we mean by that?**
- **Or do we need to help build a new popular movement/ND movement/Popular coalition?**

These are painful questions because, dating back to the late 1920s, hundreds of thousands of South African communists have gone to jail, have suffered martyrdom, have served in the ranks of MK, have worked tirelessly to build a powerful ANC capable of leading a revolutionary alliance. But, today, there are no clear-cut answers to any of the questions posed above. However, it is possible to distinguish some trends.

The negative problems within the ANC are more and more indicative of systemic features that affect the organization at ALL levels. This is not to say that there are not many good ANC comrades, and many pockets of relative health and of internal and surely growing resistance to the decay. However, for the moment, the most reckless and parasitic forces have managed to colonise large parts of the organization. The ability (or even the willingness) of the ANC collectively to embark on serious self-correction is (at least for the moment) uncertain.

Will the ANC's December 2017 national conference (or an earlier conference as is being mooted) provide impetus for change? This is possible and desirable, but far from certain.

All of this means that in the current fluid situation the SACP should not place all of its tactical and medium-term strategic calculations in one basket **including (but not only) any decision about future modalities of SACP involvement in elections.**

1. We must, as best as possible, seek to help the revitalization of the ANC on the basis of a principled and unifying program. In supporting such revitalization the SACP must scrupulously avoid simply becoming part of another ANC faction or personality based fan-base. In this respect there are self-critical lessons that as a Party we must learn from the 2007-2009 period.
2. We must more clearly define (for ourselves in the first place) what we mean by a reconfigured alliance, and proceed to reconfigure actively in practice – rather than see this as something that we negotiate with the ANC, still less await the ANC's permission to do so.
3. We must, as the SACP, and with or without the ANC, continue to reach out to a range of progressive formations, in particular around practical programs and issues – as we are doing with the South African Council of Churches corporate capture project, for instance.
4. Clearly, this means that, amongst other things, the SACP's Red October campaigns are a critical means for rooting ourselves amongst the broad working class and popular masses. **But here we need to ask more self-critical questions. What substantively have we achieved with our campaigns? Are we able to effectively sustain them? From one October to the next October, do we sufficiently review and assess progress?**
5. If we understand our current challenge is to assume greater responsibility for the NDR in the current reality, then this must also have implications for the STYLE and MANNER in which the SACP conducts itself. A narrow left sectarianism, preaching to other formations with a jargon-filled Marxist arrogance is exactly how we should NOT conduct ourselves. While setting an example of commitment, activism and strategic clarity in PRACTICE, we should also learn from

the struggles and collective organizational experience of women in stokvels and co-ops, for instance. Or from those who, driven by desperation, “illegally” occupy land. We should not close ourselves off from other progressive influences on the youth – we should read, understand critically, and celebrate Fanon and Steve Biko, for instance.

But if we are to play a more active leadership role in the NDR - how do we understand the NDR?

An inability to provide a clear strategic understanding of the NDR in the current phase, still less of a radical second phase of the NDR, is one of the symptoms of the ANC’s serious decline. Part of the SACP taking responsibility for the NDR must also be providing a broad strategic perspective and actual content to the NDR in the current phase. What follows is simply a schematic outline, in which, for the purposes of exposition we outline separately the three (in reality deeply integrated) pillars of the NDR (the “N”, the “D” and the “R”):

The NATIONAL Dimension

The National aspect of our NDR itself embraces several components:

- Radical/progressive nationalism – the NDR requires ongoing mobilisation around the “national grievance” of the historically oppressed. Communists must not abandon the “national question” to opportunists of the left (EFF), or of the right (tenderpreneurs, Gupta supporters). Nor must we abandon a radical and progressive nationalism in the name of espousing an empty “multi-racial” rainbowism. Any principled non-racialism (as the SACP has understood since the late 1920s) must place overcoming the systemic features that reproduce racialized inequality and poverty at the centre of its strategic perspective.
- Nation building – nation building is not just the important cultural, symbolic, and ideological, tasks (“Rhodes must fall”, de-colonisation, principled non-racialism, etc.), but also material conditions for nation building (a new development path, infrastructural transformation, overcoming apartheid space) – and
- These latter national tasks in our South African reality can only be, also, anti-monopoly capital – for instance, the manner in which private monopoly property holdings and property speculation block the transformation of apartheid urban geography.
- Democratic National Sovereignty – the “national” dimension of the NDR is also critically about consolidating an effective national democratic state and popular power capable of defending our democratic national sovereignty as best as possible in a hostile world – i.e. any serious NDR has to be anti-imperialist.
- But to be anti-imperialist means also struggling in solidarity with all victims of imperialism, therefore a consistent anti-imperialism must be INTER-NATIONALIST.

When articulated in this way, it should be clear why an effective NDR in the South African reality requires a SOCIALIST VANGUARD PARTY.

What about the DEMOCRATIC dimension of the NDR?

Thorough-going democratization of SA is both a key objective of AND the principal means for advancing the NDR. It involves:

- Deepening, consolidating and defending democratic constitutional rights (eg. the right to work – see the Freedom Charter “everyone has the right and duty to work”);

- Deepening one-person one-vote representative democracy which involves new challenges:
 - Insulating democracy from corporate capture, money politics
 - Dangers of factionalism, gate-keeping, candidate selection
 - Tendencies towards federalist dissipation of the NDR via provincial legislatures for instance.
- Participatory (direct) democracy – (re)-building organs of popular power
 - What is the experience with Community Policing Forums, School Governing Bodies, Ward Committees, Ward Budgeting, Community Work Programs, Co-ops, Worker control, etc.? Have we been able to build popular power through these and other participatory institutions? If not, how do we organizationally advance democratic popular power?

The REVOLUTIONARY dimension of the NDR

The revolutionary dimension of the NDR refers not to an event but to the revolutionary struggle for deep Structural Transformation – placing our political economy onto a new sustainable, developmental path that goes to the root in radically transforming those structural features that continue to reproduce the crises of racialized (and class, gendered and spatial) inequality, poverty and unemployment. In very general terms this involves:

- A second more radical phase of the NDR;
- A democratic developmental state bound by strategic discipline;
- Unity of working class and popular strata – i.e. popular democratic hegemony in all sites of power; and
- Preferably sustained majority rule – (have we squandered 22 years??) and not two-party alternation...which brings us directly to:

The strategic party political agenda of imperialism and monopoly capital in South Africa - a “centrist” stalemate

Before considering the South African reality more directly, it is important to note that globally “liberal democratic” multi-party dispensations are now in deepening trouble, including within the advanced capitalist countries themselves. Many mainstream commentators are now speaking about a “crisis of representation”. This is in marked contrast to the 1990s triumphalism that proudly proclaimed that “liberal democratic” dispensations along with “free market” policies were a global and irreversible trend.

Some background might be useful. With the weakening, and the eventual collapse of the Soviet bloc and the ending of the Cold War period, (neo-)liberal think-tanks trumpeted the dawn of a “third wave of democratisation”, in which increasingly large swathes of the world would embrace “liberal democratic multi-party” dispensations. This was the agenda that was advocated and implemented (in varying degrees) throughout the former Soviet bloc countries. But it was also an agenda that targeted former pro-imperialist, authoritarian regimes (including white minority rule in SA). With the ending of the Cold War, many pro-Western regional gendarme states had become a liability to the globalisation

interests of imperialism and pressure was placed on them to negotiate elite-pacted “transitions to democracy” (from the Philippines to the military juntas in much of Latin America, to PW Botha’s apartheid regime). Of course, this imperialist-driven “democratisation” agenda was not (and still isn’t) applied consistently – notably in the Middle East, with Zionist Israel, and petro-feudal Saudi Arabia being obvious examples.

After 1994, and for several years, South Africa was hailed in imperialist circles as a poster-child for the supposed global “Third Wave of Democratisation” underway. President Mbeki’s African Renaissance took up this theme, promoting “liberal democracies” in Africa. Of course, the democratic breakthrough in SA was an important step forward, and both here in SA and in many parts of Latin America, for instance (Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Ecuador), progressive forces have been able to use democratisation to advance more nationally sovereign, social and economic agendas, countering the worst of right-wing imposed structural adjustment programmes, expanding social security systems and even advancing some national (re-)industrialisation.

But for imperialism and local monopoly capitalist interests this was not what was intended as an outcome of democratisation in the global South. In particular, where democratically elected, left-leaning (or just centre-left) patriotic forces have achieved a degree of relative electoral permanency (in Brazil until recently, or South Africa, for instance), and therefore a capacity to drive SYSTEMIC CHANGES in their respective societies, this is seen as a threat to imperialist interests.

While various regime change and “colours” revolutions are attempted, the preferred imperialist option is to introduce “electoral uncertainty” and therefore regular alternance between political elites – a political, centrist stale-mate. And yet it is precisely this kind of institutionalised “democratic” system that is in deepening crisis, even in the heartlands of Western democracy.

Without going into detail here, some of the symptoms of this crisis include the Brexit referendum, the Trump phenomenon and its counter in an unpopular “least worst” corporate candidate, Hilary Clinton. There is the relative and unanticipated success of politicians and movements representing varying degrees of popular rejection of the “political establishment” in the heartlands of Western democracy. On the one hand there are left-leaning politicians like the UK labour party leader Jeremy Corbyn (currently at war with his own parliamentary caucus), Bernie Sanders in the US, or formations like Syriza in Greece and Podemos in Spain. By and large, these political personalities and formations have drawn their strength by mobilising politically alienated younger generations, often relying on the new social media, YouTube, crowd funding and other means to bypass hostile media, and the corporate and the political establishment.

In many parts of Europe the old centre-left/centre-right alternance has been seriously disrupted. This is sometimes done by an anti-politics politics, as is the case with the Five Star Movement in Italy, led by a comedian Beppe Grillo, which now controls major cities like Rome and Turin. But the crisis of “liberal democracy” is also manifested in the alarming rise of chauvinistic forces (Trump, of course, but also UKIP in the UK which mobilised the Brexit vote, or the AfD in Germany) and extreme right-wing, proto-fascist movements in Greece and France, which have seen their electoral support rise significantly. In some cases, extreme right forces are now the dominant political formations in their countries (Austria, Hungary).

It is important always to remember that neither the SACP nor the broader ANC-led alliance single-handedly shape the electoral terrain. Other forces also do so. Since the late 1980s, the key liberal strategists aligned to both South African monopoly capital and imperialist think-tanks recognised the importance of having an “ANC brand” ruling in SA, at least for a transitional period of a decade or two, without which stabilisation within the framework of a “liberal democracy” would be impossible. However, there were two problems for this strategic agenda:

- The presence and influence of the SACP and a radical trade union federation within the ANC-led alliance; and
- The fear that the ANC as an electoral party would achieve sustained and overwhelming majority electoral support. In a one-party dominant system, monopoly capital is often more limited in its ability to play off (and pay off) “competing” centre-left/centre-right parties. A political party or popular movement with sustained and overwhelming majority support has (in theory) greater autonomy from capital.

This fear of one-party dominance is why all the liberal media in the past weeks have hailed the August 3 election as a “maturing” of South Africa’s democracy – as if previous 60 percent plus majorities for the ANC were a sign of electoral “immaturity”.

The current flirtation between the DA and EFF is not part of either’s long-game strategy. In particular, the DA’s medium-term strategy is to make common ground with a moderated ANC - either in a coalition or in a liberal centre-right/centre-left dominated electoral dispensation of the kind that has (but increasingly no longer) characterised “mature” liberal democracies. This is a preferred outcome for monopoly capital and imperialist circles – because it provides for the appearance of democratic choice and competition, but essentially introduces an institutionalised stale-mate that would be especially inappropriate for our South African reality that so evidently requires a major structural revolution.

Zille when she was still DA leader frequently articulated a perspective in which the DA, once it had knocked the ANC down to below 50% support nationally, would be able, as part of a coalition deal, to force the “constitutionalists”, “the moderate centre” within the ANC to cut loose the “radicals” on the “left”. This is exactly the 2019 agenda that in the past weeks commentators like Alistair Sparks and Peter Bruce have evoked (see Bruce: “Coalition deals will soon test SA’s political maturity”, Business Day 5 August 2016). In this article, Bruce urges Maimane to explore coalitions with the ANC in Johannesburg and Tshwane: “We all know Zuma is a problem. But, as we are constantly reminded by the voices raised against him within the ANC, his party is not a lost cause.”

The DA won’t do this now, not because they believe the EFF is closer to them, but because coalitions with the ANC at this point don’t suit their 2019 agenda. They hope to bring the ANC down below 50% nationally by then, as a result of their own inroads, but also as a result of ongoing inner turmoil within the ANC. It is only then, from a position of greater strength that they will explore cooperation with a weakened ANC.

We are not suggesting that there is some grand conspiracy – BUT THERE IS A STRATEGY! And this broad imperialist/monopoly capital/DA strategy also explains the love-hate positioning from these quarters in regard to the EFF. The acres of media coverage that the EFF has enjoyed over the past two years is, in part, a measure of the dumbing down of media commentary in SA, in which one-liners and melodrama drown out serious analysis. But it is also a result of the role required of the EFF – to knock the ANC’s electoral majority **but without the EFF itself advancing much beyond 8 percent**. In this sense, the EFF has perfectly performed its assigned role within this strategy in these local government elections.

It is precisely the role that many commentators from the mid-1990s had hopefully assigned to the SACP – with their endless and hypocritical encouragement of the SACP to fight elections on our own.

It is noticeable that there has now been a relative cooling in the commercial media towards the EFF, but from a neo-liberal perspective they still have an 8% role in the run-up to 2019. Of course, we should not make the mistake of believing that all or even a majority of EFF leaders, let alone supporters, are knowing role-players in this agenda. The EFF leadership is also hoping to split and/or knock the ANC

down to less than 50% nationally and provincially. In the post August 3 negotiations, EFF leaders indicated to the ANC negotiators that they would “never” form a coalition with the DA. Their only coalition partner, they said, would be the ANC – “but not now”.

The imperialist/monopoly capital/DA strategic agenda might play out successfully. But it will be a disaster for SA. The NDR will be stuck and the state capacity to transform the underlying systemic features reproducing racialised inequality, poverty and unemployment will be set back even further.

One of the key weaknesses and a strategic blind-spot of this DA/monopoly capital agenda is its inability to read and understand the impact and role of the SACP. They characterise the ANC as being in two blocs:

- A moderate “liberal” bloc – the “constitutionalists” (until recently Trevor Manuel was a poster-boy for this bloc – currently the ANC Gauteng province is seen in this light);
- The “radicals” – the “Pirates of Polokwane”, to which the SACP and COSATU are assigned, but along with the Guptas, Zumas, etc.

Given this DA/monopoly capital strategic agenda, it becomes clearer why the SACP’s current positioning – defending the constitution (which is NOT a liberal but, in many respects, a national democratic constitution), campaigning against corruption and corporate capture, becomes so important, in holding the line of a radical NDR underpinned by popular power.

In brief summary

1. The NDR is in serious crisis – the SACP has a major role in providing ideological, organisational and activist leadership at this time.
2. The question of the Party and State Power needs to be considered within this context and not in abstract terms.
3. State power and winning elections are not ends in themselves. The question of state power should not be reduced to winning elections alone
4. The political situation is quite fluid. There are many uncertainties about the ANC’s ability to address its own internal problems, and particularly what the outcome of 2017 will be. In this overall context it is important that the SACP keeps its tactical options open while continuing to build its structures, its ideological unity, and, above all, its activism on the ground.





5

The Party and State Power

Report of the work of the SACP 13th CCC Commission on the Party and State Power (November 2012)

The question of state power has always been a central theme of the Communist Party's analyses and programmatic perspectives. However, around 2005 the question of the SACP and state power arose within the Party in a relatively new context. There was a growing concern about the post-1994 state and the class character that had been consolidated within it.

In 2005 the SACP produced two important interventions – the **Medium Term Vision document**, and the **November 2005 CC discussion document**. In these interventions the Party advanced the thesis that, in the first decade after 1994, the new democratic state had been progressively hegemonised by the bourgeoisie. This hegemony (never a stable nor unchallenged hegemony) was realised through a combination of factors, including –

- the capacity of established monopoly capital within SA to regroup after the defeat of white minority rule and to hegemonise key parts of the new state, aligning it to an agenda of capitalist stabilisation and renewed accumulation;
- the cultivation of a new comprador stratum within the movement and state; and
- the relative demobilisation of the ANC and partially successful attempts to marginalize the SACP and COSATU.

The strategic alliance between monopoly capital and an emergent fraction of capital linked closely to elements of the ANC/state leadership lay at the heart of what the SACP began to call the **“1996 class project”**.

This was the general analysis advanced by the SACP in 2005. It was to have a significant impact on the ANC's 2005 NGC and COSATU's 2006 national congress. In opposition to the 1996 class project's strategic agenda, the SACP's MTV document called for the second decade of freedom to be a decade in which the hegemony of the working class in all key sites of power would be realised.

But how?

We argued that an alternative agenda should include, critically, **active popular mobilisation; the building of a strong SACP able to resist attempts at marginalisation; and the re-building of the Alliance as the key strategic political centre.**

But what about contesting the bourgeoisie's consolidation of hegemony over state power?

Establishment of the Commission on the Party and State Power (CPSP)

At the SACP's 2005 Special National Congress, some delegates argued that in the light of the relative marginalisation of the left, and the pro-capitalist orientation of the state, the SACP should contest

elections independently. The 2005 Special Congress was not able to reach any definitive decision on this matter, and a resolution was taken to set up a special CC commission to consider the various “modalities” of the SACP’s engagement with electoral politics. Rather than constituting a new entity, **the 11th Congress Central Committee mandated the PB to act, under the direction of the GS, as the Commission on the Party and State Power.** In February 2007 the Commission tabled to the CC a draft interim report, **“The SACP, State Power and the Working Class”.** Among the main elements of this report were:

- **A critical reflection on the SACP’s experience so far with election politics post-1994.** This included a reflection on the degree to which the SACP had succeeded in impacting on successive ANC election manifestos (including the RDP); the ability of the party to assert an independent profile within ANC-led electoral campaigns; the impact of the Party on the list and deployment process; and our experience with SACP members serving as ANC elected representatives, including the experience of Parliamentary Discussion Forums. **The general broad conclusion was that the Party had had some successes and impact but that a major review and improvement in all these areas was necessary – regardless of what electoral modality the SACP eventually decided upon.**
- **A broad survey of the electoral experience of Communist Parties internationally.** In particular, the report focused on CPs operating in conditions similar to our own, in other words, in multi-party dispensations in capitalist dominated societies. We looked at examples from Europe, Latin America, India and Japan. Notwithstanding some inspiring achievements, the general conclusion of this broad survey was that electoral politics within capitalist dominated societies is an extremely difficult terrain for principled communist parties. A major reason for difficulty lies with the huge expense of elections (dominated often by massive campaign funding of centrist and anti-left formations by big business), and the control of the public debate agenda by the commercial media. **Generally, left electoral successes in these cases involve one or another variant of broad left fronts, alliances and coalitions in which CPs are one (often a small) component.** Nowhere else does our dual membership arrangement (ANC/SACP) exist – and therefore the SACP’s advantages in seeking to build working class hegemony in a capitalist society on the terrain of multi-party electoral politics is unique. The study also noted that the electoral terrain also often provokes serious strains (and even splits) within CPs – between cadres within legislatures and those more active on the mass terrain. *(Since this study was conducted it is noteworthy that there have been set-backs in the two most inspiring Communist Party electoral success stories – in the Indian states of Kerala and West Bengal the CPI(M) and its Left Front allies lost elections in 2009. In the case of West Bengal, this was after 40 years of sustained CPI(M)-led rule. On the other hand there have been important left electoral advances in a number of Latin American societies, and in some of these (Brazil, Venezuela, Uruguay, for instance) local communist parties have been part of wider coalitions.)*
- **A reflection on the institutional capacity and functioning of our national parliament (and provincial legislatures).** The general conclusion was that parliament was the weakest and least effective of the arms of government. Its public legitimacy was low, and the Opposition was hegemonising it more effectively than the ANC. Out of this analysis the SACP began more actively to take up the call for **the abolition of floor-crossing** (a source of considerable damage to the standing of parliament at the time) and the **passing of legislation to enable Parliament to amend the budget (and other Money Bills).** (Both objectives were realised – although the degree to which the ANC-led alliance has been able to consolidate hegemony within Parliament, and the role of the SACP in Parliament need ongoing assessment)

As to whether the Party should campaign for elections independently or not, the February 2007 Commission interim report left the matter open for further debate and decision-making, but it offered some possible options. The report also noted that, whatever the ultimate decision in this regard, the DEBATE itself was already proving to be healthy. It had shaken Party comrades, perhaps especially those in legislatures, out of a certain routinism.

Meanwhile, this SACP debate was also actively canvassed and taken up within allied structures. In particular, this was the case with COSATU. **COSATU commissioned independent surveys among its shop stewards and general membership to assess preferred electoral options.** This process suggested that, while the SACP's positions on policy matters (eg. GEAR, privatisation, etc.) were widely supported within COSATU, there was NOT major support (at that time at least) for an independent SACP (or workers party) electoral campaign (in fact it was less than 6%).

Resolution of the 12th National Congress July 2007

It was against this general background and informed by the work of the Commission that our 12th National Congress meeting in July 2007 adopted the following resolution on "The SACP and State Power":

NOTING

1. *That the question of state power is the central question of any revolution*
2. *That state power is located in diverse sites, including the executive, the legislatures, the judiciary, security forces, the broad public sector, state owned enterprises, and other public institutions*
3. *That the strategic Medium Term Vision (MTV) of the SACP is to secure working class hegemony in the State in its diversity and in all other sites of power*
4. *That electoral politics are an important but not an exclusive terrain for the contesting of state power*
5. *Working class power in the state is related to working class power in all other sites, including the imperative of developing organs of popular power, active forms of participatory democracy and social mobilisation*
6. *That structures of the SACP and our cadres have confronted many problems with the way in which the Alliance has often functioned, particularly with regard to policy making, the lack of joint programmes on the ground, deployments and electoral list processes.*

AND BELIEVING THAT

1. *While the state of white minority rule has been abolished and important constitutional and other gains have been won, the post-1994 state requires significant transformation.*
2. *This includes amongst other things:*
 - a) *redressing the damaging impact of privatisation and restructuring policies that have weakened and exposed key strategic areas to the dominance of private capital;*
 - b) *Addressing the lack of clear cadre development policy in the state;*
 - c) *Building the strategic capacity of the state to drive developmental programmes;*
 - d) *Rebuilding critical sectors of the public service, including health care and education, that are still reeling from the effects of years of down-sizing and other restructuring measures;*
 - e) *Transforming the key area of local government, often the weakest sphere of governance.*
3. *That SACP cadres who are deployed as ANC elected representatives, or as public servants must continue to owe allegiance to the Party and cannot conduct themselves in ways that are contrary to the fundamental policies, principles and values of the SACP. The same principle applies to SACP cadres in other deployments, including within the trade union movement, community organisations, etc.*



AND FURTHER BELIEVING THAT

- 1) *The alliance requires major reconfiguration if the NDR is to be advanced, deepened and defended, and if we are to achieve the SACP's medium term vision objectives of building working class hegemony in all sites of power, including the state*
- 2) *That this reconfiguration of the Alliance must include the following elements:*
 - a) *The Alliance must establish itself as a strategic political centre;*
 - b) *This political centre must develop a common capacity to drive strategy, broad policy, campaigns, deployment and accountability.*
- 3) *At the same time, this reconfiguration of the Alliance must respect the independent role and strategic tasks of each of the alliance partners.*

THEREFORE RESOLVE

- 1) *That the SACP deepens its capacity to provide strategic leadership in regard to key policy sites of state power, including industrial policy, social policies and the safety, security and defence sectors.*
- 2) *That the SACP contests state power in elections in the context of a reconfigured Alliance.*
- 3) *To mandate the incoming CC to actively pursue the different potential modalities of future SACP electoral campaigning. These modalities could involve either:*
 - *An electoral pact with our Alliance partners, which could include agreement on deployments, possible quotas, the accountability of elected representatives including the accountability of SACP cadres to the Party, the election manifesto, and the importance of an independent face and role for the SACP and its cadres within legislatures.*

OR

- *Independent electoral lists on the voter's roll with the possible objective of constituting a coalition Alliance agreement post elections.*
- 1) *The SACP must actively engage its Alliance partners on these proposals.*
 - 2) *The Party and State Power Commission must take forward its work to study international experiences closely, and to analyse in detail and evaluate our local reality.*
 - 3) *The incoming CC must convene a policy conference within a year, in order to assess the feasibility and potential advantages and disadvantages of the different modalities noted above, including further detailed research.*
 - 4) *Whatever options are chosen, we must strengthen the SACP's policy capacity, and our organised strength on the ground.*

This important resolution taken at our July 2007 12th National Congress emerged, of course, partly out of an inner-Party debate. But it was also an intervention into what was then a tense Alliance reality in the immediate run-up to the ANC's 52nd, Polokwane, National Conference.

The impact of the ANC's 52nd (Polokwane) National Conference 2007

The outcome of the ANC's Polokwane Conference (both its electoral and policy resolution outcomes) created space for what the SACP's resolution had called for – a “reconfigured alliance”. Of course, such a reconfiguration did not simply follow automatically and there were further challenges – particularly from what we later called the “New Tendency”. However, post-Polokwane, and with the 1996 class project having been somewhat defeated, those within the SACP arguing for an independent SACP electoral list in the 2009 elections tended to be less vocal.

As a result, the work done by the “Party and State Power Commission” in the course of 2008 tended to shift focus. While discussion around “different modalities” of SACP participation in elections did not disappear, the Commission now focused on producing a more substantive Marxist-Leninist analysis of the post-1994 South African state. It also focused on making concrete proposals for a restructuring of the state after the 2009 elections. The key intervention of the Commission at this point was its report to the August 2008 Central Committee, entitled, **“The SACP and the State – Ready to Govern”**

August 2008 Commission Report – “The SACP and the State – Ready to Govern”

After summarising the previous work of the Commission, the August 2008 Report then referred to the 12th Congress Resolution (quoted above), and noted the following key features:

“Several key features of this resolution need to be noted:

- While upholding the importance of electoral politics, the resolution is at pains to avoid a narrow electoralist approach to the question of state power. It notes that state power “is located in diverse sites, including the executive, the legislatures, the judiciary, security forces, the broad public sector, state owned enterprises, and other public institutions”. It also notes that working class hegemony over the state is related to working class power and mobilisation outside of the state. In short, **the question of the SACP and state power is NOT reducible to the question of the SACP and its electoral role** – which is not to say that this latter is an unimportant matter.
- The resolution is careful to locate the question of the SACP and state power within the context of our medium term vision (MTV) of building **working class hegemony in ALL sites of power** (including the state). **The question of the exact role of the SACP (should it aspire to eventually be THE [governing] party? for example) is a practical, relatively open-ended, and therefore conjunctural matter that needs always to be subordinate to the strategic priority of building working class (and not a particular party's) hegemony in the state and elsewhere.** The SACP is a weapon at the service of the proletarian class struggle, and not the other way around – i.e. the working class is not there to fulfil the SACP's ambitions.” (Commission Report to CC, August 2008)

The institutional configuration of the state

Most significantly the Commission Report to the August 2008 CC began to pay much greater critical attention to what it called the “institutional configuration of the post-1994” state. It noted that “As the SACP we have devoted considerable time and attention to tracing the displacement of our shared alliance 1994 programmatic platform (the RDP) by a very different strategic agenda (GEAR). However, we have probably paid insufficient attention to the question of how this displacement was facilitated and perpetuated by the institutional configuration of the post-1994 state.”

The report continued: "In 1994, instead of the RDP being institutionalised as the overall strategic programme of government, it was marginalized into a Ministry within the presidency, headed by a Minister without Portfolio. The highest ranking official was a DDG. Attempts by the RDP ministry to coordinate work across government were resented by line departments who saw it as trespassing on their turf and the respective departmental DGs easily outranked the RDP DDG in the ensuing battles. The budget of the RDP Ministry was relatively limited, much of it donor funding and project-linked... what was meant to be THE integrative transformational national democratic programme [was reduced to] ...a list of discreet projects many of them chosen or favoured by external players. The gap created at the centre of government in terms of the key strategic planning, integration and coordination, and monitoring functions by this marginalisation (and early demise) of the RDP Ministry was then filled by the **Treasury**."

"But Treasury's mandate and key competence lies in financial management and this means that planning in the state is largely reduced to bureaucratic compliance with a medium-term budget cycle that emphasises financial management and mechanical templates. Evaluation of performance is reduced to measuring ability to spend a budget. For the Treasury the principal concern is the preservation of its macro-targets while the actual quality of outputs is liable to be less central.

"This results in the dislocation of any effective strategic coherence with a string of unintegrated and unstrategic mega-projects often dominating budgetary allocations – arms procurement, Coega, Gautrain, Pebble Bed Modular Reactor, Dube Tradeport, 2010, etc. Many of these are big infrastructural programmes with little thought about their sustainability beyond the construction phase. In all probability many of these represent corporate/comprador enclaves for private accumulation.

"The attempt to introduce some degree of integrative coherence into the state via the **clusters** has also generally not been successful. The clustering system brings together several line department ministers, but there is no hierarchy among ministers and in many of the clusters there are prolonged and sterile deadlocks – the most notable being the long-delayed conversion of TV broadcasting to digital."

"The coherence of the post-1994 democratic state is further compromised by **dysfunctionalities between the three spheres of government**. Provinces in particular are often responsible for problematic major mega-projects and the hollowing out of local government has often reduced municipalities into tendering agencies with all the attendant dangers of corruption. At the provincial and local level, the state is increasingly less and less an **implementer** and more and more a tender processor."

The August 2008 Commission Report also raised the reconfiguration of national departments. This was a proposal that the Commission through the SACP delegation had already tabled at the May 2008 Alliance Summit. To quote the proposals:

- A single rural development department rather than an under-resourced land affairs department as a junior partner to agriculture
- The separation of Minerals and Energy into two departments, to prevent the capture of energy policy by mining interests, and to ensure that there is a serious focus on energy security;
- Doing away with a department of Public Enterprises, and the allocation of SOEs to the relevant line departments; and
- The creation of a department of tertiary education."

Significantly, **three out of four of these suggestions were to be implemented a year later in the immediate aftermath of the 2009 national elections.**

However, what was probably the central “reconfiguration” of the state proposal put forward by the August 2008 Commission Report was only to be implemented in 2009 in a very partial form. This is what the report referred to as “an institutional centre for government-wide planning”.

An institutional centre for government-wide planning

The August 2008 Commission Report argued for a national planning capacity in the following terms:

“Central to all that has been stated above is the argument that capitalist hegemony over the post-1994 state has been facilitated by (and in turn it has exacerbated) the absence of a strategic national democratic **developmental** (as opposed to budgetary/macro-economic) planning and co-ordination capacity in the state.

“If we are to build working class hegemony in the state then addressing this absence becomes absolutely critical. We have resolved that the ANC and the Alliance must constitute the strategic political centre. But there is little prospect of this being realised in practice if there is not technical and institutional capacity within the state to plan, monitor and coordinate our public resources – and therefore to discipline capital. An Alliance political centre might resolve on driving the strategic priority of job creation, but if the state is incoherent, locked into bureaucratic routinism, and captured and fragmented by the cherry-picking interests of compradorist factions within our movement working with monopoly capital, then there is little prospect of driving through strategic transformation.”

Indeed, the idea of a national planning capacity was not new. At the ANC’s Polokwane 2007 National Conference the SACP had advanced the need for a national planning capacity. This was captured in one of the Polokwane resolutions:

“A strengthened role for the central organs of state, including through the creation of an institutional centre for government-wide economic planning with the necessary resources and authority to prepare and implement long and medium term economic and development planning.”

The SACP 2008 Commission report noted and welcomed this resolution and added that:

“This planning centre [should] be located within the presidency; [and].... this planning centre [should] embrace not just economic planning, but planning in general”

The SACP and state power following the 2009 elections

Participating in the 2009 elections on the ANC lists, the SACP played an active role in shaping the elections manifesto and in the list process. Following the elections, a significant number of SACP members (in their capacity as ANC members, of course) were elected into the National Assembly and into provincial legislatures. The Party was also actively consulted (for the first time since 1994) around ministerial and deputy ministerial appointments. While SACP comrades had been in Cabinet since 1994, previously the deployments (at best) often lacked any coherence and (at worst) may have even been deliberately designed to compromise SACP leadership with appointments to problematic areas (involving, for instance, the down-sizing of the public sector, or driving privatisation).

Since 2009, there has been a clear change – with numbers of SACP members deployed to key positions in the inter-related economic, infrastructure, rural development and skills and training sectors. This pattern was further consolidated by the Cabinet re-shuffle in June 2012.

While SACP members deployed into the national executive have not acted (and should not act) as a factional caucus, it is noteworthy that, working with other deployed comrades, they have succeeded in driving important advances in the key economic-infrastructure and related sectors – in particular, **the New Growth Path, the Industrial Policy Action Programme** (in its second and soon to be third iteration), the 2011 launch of the **Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission**, and a major investment in re-building the **Further Education and Training Sector**. For the first time, there is a concerted effort to establish cross-cutting integration between these and other key policy and programmatic areas.

However, as noted above, the proposal to establish a fully-fledged STATE National Planning Organ within the presidency was not implemented after the 2009 elections. Instead, the NPC that was established was constituted of “civil society” members, that is, part-time commissioners from academia, research institutes, and the business sector. In effect, the NPC corresponded to what the SACP had proposed as an additional ADVISORY committee to a fully-fledged STATE Planning Organ. While the National Development Plan that has emerged from the NPC is a generally reasonable if uneven document – it is rather more a “vision” than a state plan. It has not emerged organically from within the state and although “adopted” by Cabinet, it is not clear how it can be implemented, or what kind of binding discipline it could possibly exercise over different line departments, or spheres of government, other than in a general “visionary” kind of way.

In short, the nettle of institutionalising a transversal, strategic, developmental discipline ACROSS the state has not yet been fully grasped. There still remain several contenders in this space – each with its own major objective (and often subjective) limitations (Treasury, Monitoring and Evaluation, Economic Development, COGTA, DPSA, NPC, and the clusters). Probably the most ambitious attempt to fill the gap of strategic coordination is the newly formed Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission – although its focus is infrastructure and its institutional functioning has yet to be bedded down in law. **As the SACP Commission we believe that there are many positive lessons that can be learnt from the emerging PICC model – however, we need to continue to press for a fully-fledged STATE planning organ to be established after 2014.**

While the SACP’s influence within the economic and infrastructure sectors has been marked, the Party’s influence over, and even policy development perspectives in regard to the critical **criminal-justice-defence** sectors has been marginal. And yet there are many challenges in this sector, including in Intelligence, SAPS and Defence. The SACP’s 12th and 13th Congresses produced resolutions on challenges in the SANDF - but we have generally failed to make any serious impact. The Marikana tragedy, the high number of civilian deaths at the hands of the police, allegations of torture, and the failure to provide basic community safety to many townships and informal settlements have highlighted serious challenges in SAPS. Again, our impact has been minimal.

The Augmented CC should mandate the SACP “Commission on the Party and State Power” to expand its work in these critical areas, and link this work to community mobilisation around street committees, CPFs, etc.

2011 Local Government Elections and a renewed debate on the SACP’s role in elections

The ANC’s 2007 Polokwane Conference and the 2009 National and Provincial elections created a new climate within the Alliance and resulted in the relative muting of the debate within the Party around whether the SACP should contest elections independently. However, those advancing this perspective did not disappear. Advocates of this approach tended to come from Party districts and branches in which there was a history of significant intra-Alliance tension and conflict. Real (or alleged) flaws in the ANC’s local government election nominations process in 2011 in some localities gave additional impetus once more to calls from some quarters for the SACP to contest elections separately.

While the proposed modalities for such independent contesting varied – generally those advancing the call suggested that an independent SACP list should be in selected municipalities (not everywhere); that the objective would be to contest “within the context of the Alliance”; and therefore to seek some kind of coalition agreement with the ANC AFTER the election. The proposal was presented, therefore, as “NOT being an attempt to break the alliance”. The SACP CC noted these arguments, but viewed them as unrealistic. In a situation in which there were extreme tensions WITHIN the ANC over the list nominations process, the idea that there could be some localised “gentlemen’s agreement” between the SACP and ANC on separate lists was seen as utopian. The CC believed that, at least in current conditions, it remained the responsibility of SACP cadres to fight for the principled unity of the ANC and Alliance, and to work to build a majority within the ANC to defeat the “new tendency” and other negative factions, and generally to build working class hegemony within the ANC. Separate SACP electoral lists would compromise these priorities and play into the hands of the new tendency and other factionalists within the ANC.

Generally, this line of march was approved by an overwhelming majority within the SACP, and the 2011 local government elections saw significant numbers of SACP cadres being elected as ANC councillors – including as executive mayors in two metros. However, not all Party comrades were happy with this approach, and not all were happy with the local government elections outcomes.

This was the context in which at our July 2012, 13th National Congress there were tensions within the “Party and State Power” Congress commission. This was, perhaps, the one discordant note in an otherwise highly unified Congress. Not for the first time, this particular Congress commission was deliberately packed and targeted by one SACP district in particular – although there were also vociferous individual voices from elsewhere as well. The chair of the Commission was treated abusively, and the behaviour of some of the participants bordered on factionalism.

Those calling for the Party to contest elections independently at the 13th Congress commission were particularly aggrieved that the Commission on the Party and State Power (CPSP) had not tabled a separate report to Congress. They were not satisfied with the explanation that the ongoing work of the CPSP had been incorporated into both the Political Report to Congress and the draft SARS document. The Congress commission proposed that the incoming CPSP must table such a report to this Augmented CC, and this was accepted as part of the resolution on the “Party and State Power” by the plenary of Congress.

This present report from the CPSP is, accordingly, tabled partly in fulfilment of this Congress resolution. However, it is probable that the present report may not satisfy many of those who raised the issue in the commission at the 13th Congress. These comrades appear to expect the work of the CPSP to be narrowly if not exclusively focused on the Party’s participation in elections. As we have noted throughout this report, a narrow electoralism has NEVER been the focus of the work of the CPSP. However, ongoing assessment of and debate around the Party and elections is an important topic that needs to be kept on the agenda in the light of changing circumstances. We need to manage this debate carefully, however, and we need to guard against dividing the Party between those who have benefited from ANC-led electoral processes (whether as elected deployees, or as appointed officials) and those who have not.

The struggle against the “new tendency” – and the tenderisation and agentification of the state

After 2009, the work of the Commission on the Party and State Power has focused considerably on the inter-related issues of **corruption**, **BEE primitive accumulation**, and the **new public management**

restructuring of the public service and state (as an integral component of the 1996 class project). The political context of this focus has, of course, been the sharpening intra-ANC battle (led by the SACP) against the “new tendency”. The Commission’s focus on the new public management restructuring of the public service and state (along with BEE primitive accumulation) endeavoured to shift the debate around corruption from a merely moralising and personalising discourse – to analyse more profoundly the **systemic** underpinnings of corruption.

This work of the Commission contributed to a major reworking of the relevant section in the South African Road to Socialism – as adopted at our 13th National Congress in 2012. Essentially, the new public management approach sought to apply private sector norms and practices to the state and public service – including monetarising performance incentives, the replacement of professional leadership with generic managerial leadership, the fragmentation of the state apparatus into a myriad of “cost centres” and agencies, and the outsourcing of capacity. This created a wide range of localities for rent-seeking and tenderpreneuring activities, especially in the South African reality which combined a toxic mix of:

- the subjective and objective vulnerabilities of a new political elite, in the context of an extremely unequal society;
- the strategic agenda of established capital (to protect its own interests by accommodating a buffer stratum with political connections);
- the canonization of BEE as official state policy and the deliberate fostering of a supposedly “patriotic bourgeoisie” (whose objective situation, quite apart from any subjective leanings to honesty or corruption, was always liable to lead to compradorial and parasitic behaviour); and
- fragmented, unjoined-up governance structures ushered in under the auspices of the new public management approach and inevitably creating a fertile milieu for a wide-range of rent-seeking behavior to proliferate at public expense.

Proposed ongoing tasks for the CPSP

In the run-up to the 2014 elections, the SACP/CPSP needs to build on our 2008/2009 relative success in making a major impact on changing the configuration of the national state and the systemic features that undermine a strategic developmental discipline. While important progress has been made, as we have noted above, much still needs to be done:

- Including the need for a fully-fledged STATE planning capacity. Among the many key areas that require decisive strategic attention from such a capacity is the rapid **urbanisation** process underway in our society (and throughout the global South);
- The developmental transformation of the criminal-justice-defence apparatus of the state;
- Overcoming the negative impact of the “new public management” through re-building state and parastatal capacity, through drastically limiting outsourcing; through reaffirming a professional civil service ethic; and critically by dealing much more decisively with corruption.

The CPSP also needs to empower the SACP to engage actively with the ongoing discussions around the role of provinces and the strengthening of local government.

All of this work needs to be guided by our over-riding objective of consolidating working class hegemony in all sites of power – not least within the state apparatus.



Shosholoza
Msholozini

Robben Island


SACP
TRANSFORM
FINANCIAL SECTOR
TO SERVE THE
PEOPLE



6

The State, the SACP and the balance forces

(SACP 13th Congress Central Committee, 19h Plenary Session, February 2017)

In our December 2016 Augmented CC political report we provided a broad periodisation of the balance of forces and main currents at play within the ANC and Alliance from the late 1980s through to 2016. This periodisation was broadly accepted by the Augmented CC and we need to consolidate it in the discussion documents for our July National Congress so that we develop a common understanding across the SACP.

We won't repeat the full periodisation here, but remind comrades that the periodisation included outlining intra-Alliance dynamics in the more recent post-2007 period. Briefly:

- The 2007 Polokwane moment and the subsequent 2008 recall of President Mbeki, marked a popular revolt against GEAR/neo-liberal macro-economic policies and the attempts to fashion the ANC as a "third way" Blairite centre-left electoral party. These developments (which were not unrelated to the deepening global crisis of neo-liberalism and their impact on South Africa) were driven by an "unholy alliance" between a more principled left, centred around the SACP and (at the time) a much stronger COSATU on the one hand, AND a network of aspirant BEE forces (often in provinces and centred on the ANCYL) that had felt marginalised from the Mbeki inner-circle of first generation BEE beneficiaries.
- The first Zuma-led cabinet of 2009 reflected a balance of forces between the SACP/COSATU left-axis, the BEE aspirant forces (which we soon characterised as the "New Tendency"), and former elements associated with the Mbeki-third term project who remained on in the ANC (and did not desert to COPE, or into the private sector). Through much of the 2009-2014 period, a careful checking-and-balancing was deftly practised by the presidency. The left was given a number of significant (especially economic) portfolios, and important gains were made through these and other portfolios – but these were always partially curbed by other appointments (in the NDP, for instance). The SACP was in the forefront (initially alone) in seeking to isolate the worst of the New Tendency – eventually resulting, amongst other things, in Malema's expulsion.
- In the new post-2014 administration, support for narrow BEE interests and the increasing reckless looting of SOCs associated with Gupta-isation have intensified while there has been continued (but uneven and a lessening) reliance on left comrades in key economic and other portfolios. Much of the recklessness is associated with uncertainties on the part of ambitious and often tainted individuals about what lies beyond December 2017 and 2019. The reckless looting and the constant revelations of more and more scandals has seen a steep decline in the ANC's moral standing and electoral support, as well as a permanent state of civil war within the ANC itself. It also occurs at a time when the organised mass presence of the working class has been considerably weakened. This means that much of civil society mobilisation against reckless looting has been left to essentially civil rights liberal forces (many formerly part of the Mbeki-third term project) who have led an important but largely moral (and often narrowly personalised) critique – without offering a broader socio-economic transformation perspective.

This, briefly, was where we had got to in our December 2016 Augmented CC in seeking to characterise the balance of forces at play within the broad movement. Essentially, the same features have been apparent since mid-December, but at this CC need to note further developments over the past two months.

These include:

- An attempt to downplay or camouflage the Gupta links and adopt a more radical narrow nationalist colouring.
- To provide “content” (finally) to the rhetoric of “radical economic transformation” – focusing almost exclusively on narrow BEE (“blacks in general, Africans in particular...and ME and MINE specifically”).
- This attempted shift has helped to broaden the network somewhat beyond those indebted to the Guptas – with, for instance, the Black Business Council, echoing the same themes as the Guptarites.

These moves have been apparent across the main events post-December 2016. Elements of a narrowing nationalist discourse can be found in:

- The reduction of the 2012 Mangaung Resolution on a “Second Radical phase of the NDR” – to “Radical economic transformation”, and the further reduction of the latter almost entirely to a question of (private black) “ownership, control and management of the economy”. **What largely disappears is the fundamental principle of SOCIAL OWNERSHIP and of POPULAR control and WORKER management.** While there is a nodding acknowledgment of the triple crisis of unemployment, poverty and inequality in the opening slide of many lekgotla power-point presentations, the moment specific sectors are considered, the question of “ownership” quickly displaces everything else.
- For instance, we are told that individual blacks only directly own 10% of the JSE, which is probably right – but what is left unexplained is: if individual blacks owned 80% of the JSE how would that impact on the triple (racialised and gendered) crises of unemployment, poverty and inequality? The same applies to the constant references to “WHITE monopoly capital” – if it became “Black monopoly capital” would that change the lives of the majority of South Africans?
- The fudging of class is carried through in the way in which correct statistics are presented but abbreviated – for instance, in the State of the Nation Address we were told “White households earn five times more than black households”. That’s sort of right, but notice what is missing – the word “average”: “The average white household earns five times more than the average black household”. This true fact is, of course, absolutely scandalous. But when you omit the word average, you omit CLASS and the growing class divisions and diverging class interests within the ANC itself.

All of this is designed to position private accumulation by narrow black elite as “radical transformation” for the benefit of the majority in general.

A second feature of this tendency that has become more apparent is that it is relatively well co-ordinated and resourced both with money and information. There is active use by fake think tanks associated with it of sophisticated “black ops” social media. More and more the danger of a parallel executive of the state is on show. So too is the recklessness – see the hurried and extremely clumsy swearing-in of Brian Molefe as ANC MP.

However, it is also important to note that this narrow nationalist faction is meeting considerable

resistance across government and within our broader movement and alliance. This is partly because its well caucused, ideological programmatic positions are often shallow and often repeat populist rhetoric. Its unity is further compromised by the fact that it is unprincipled and based on personal/private agendas and/or the leverage held over them because of “small mnyana skeletons”. Most of those arguing for these perspectives are mired in multiple scandals themselves. Much of the middle-ground within the movement is, therefore, increasingly realising the negative impact the tendency is having and will have on the ANC’s electoral prospects in 2019. However, we should not underestimate the power of patronage and money and the recklessness of these forces – if they have lost ground in some places, they have won over wavering opportunists in other cases.

So where do all these leave the SACP. What are the key challenges and responsibilities confronting us? The key conjunctural challenge is to (re)assert and contest what we mean by a second radical phase of the NDR, including radical economic transformation. ‘Going to the root’ was a timely and necessary but somewhat more of a theoretical intervention into a movement that was not ready to engage. The return to this Mangaung resolution by the ANC and government, however shallow this might be in certain cases, is a positive thing for us, as it gives us an opportunity to re-open the re-discussion, and on a wider scale, than we managed with ‘Going to the root’. In fact this is also an opportunity around which to mobilise the working class and a popular movement. We now need concrete and programmatic interventions.

Terrains of struggle for radical economic transformation

We need to identify terrains of struggle to drive a real radical economic transformation and be in the forefront of the mobilisation of the working class as the principal motive force. ONE KEY TERRAIN IS THAT OF OWNERSHIP. This must principally be driven through the mobilisation of the working class to drive radical economic transformation to primarily benefit the workers and poor of our country.

For the SACP, **our point of departure must be that radical economic transformation must address the structural features underpinning the triple crises of unemployment, poverty and inequality. Furthermore, our own perspective is that increasingly such radical economic transformation must increasingly acquire a socialist, which is to say anti-capitalism, character if it is to have any chance of succeeding. At the heart of which is the transformation of the social relations of production, as part of confronting inequality in South African society.** As we said at our Augmented Central Committee, we cannot measure radical economic transformation by how many black billionaires we produce. Whatever immediate struggles we are waging on RET they must always be linked to our struggle for socialism.

The SACP must, in a programmatic fashion, identify what must be achieved by radical economic transformation. **Our overall goal is the socialisation of the means of production. In the short-to-medium term we have to confront, challenge and roll back capitalism and its colonial and imperialist trajectory.** Through centuries of violent dispossession and dislocation of the African people in particular, the ground was laid for the importation and imposition of a capitalist economy with colonialism of a special type features, largely based on extraction and exporting of raw materials, and the importation of finished goods. It is an economy whose key sectors are highly concentrated and monopolised, whose backbone was the minerals finance complex.

The evolution of the capitalist economy in South Africa produced, and was also reproduced, by colonialism of a special type, whose principal foundation was cheap black labour. Apartheid was the highest form of colonialism of a special type. Dispossession and dislocation was the basis for the creation and development of highly exploitable wage labour. For the SACP this is important as it must inform our approach to ownership, as we cannot focus exclusively on ownership by a few individuals at the expense of the waged (and unwaged) proletariat. In our ‘Going to the root’, the above issues

are aptly captured thus: “colonial dispossession and apartheid social-engineering squeezed millions of South Africans out of productive, homestead-based communal work and (ownership) into coerced employment for someone else’s profit”

It is important for the SACP to anchor itself in terms of the above strategic and programmatic orientation so as to critique the vulgarisation of radical economic transformation by various contending class forces in South African society today. For the parasitic bourgeoisie, radical economic transformation, simply put, means placing black individuals, often with family connections, into existing capitalist structures of ownership. Or replace white monopoly capitalists with black monopoly capitalists. At the back of this discourse is using state power, often through corrupt means, to achieve these goals. In this process the ANC often gets drawn in as if it were organisationally a beneficiary of these arrangements and processes.

On the other hand, ‘leftist’ opportunists have only anchored their definition of RET exclusively around nationalisation, arguing that the NDR is an outmoded programme that should be abandoned. The DA-type liberals are opposed to the idea of radicalism, dreaming of a return to the Washington consensus as a basis to ‘grow the economy in order to grow the cake so everybody can have a share’. One of our strategic goals in RET is to build collective worker management and expand public ownership, linked to altering the distribution of wealth to reduce inequality.

The SACP must prioritise three key areas of campaigning as terrains for concrete struggles on the ground: transformation of the financial sector; industrialisation; and land and agrarian transformation.

Transformation of the financial sector

It is absolutely important that the SACP seriously intensify this campaign. One of the immediate threats now to achieve our objectives in this campaign is how the parasitic bourgeoisie is taking it up narrowly to fight for the Guptas and that their accounts that have been closed by the banks (including last month the Central Bank of China which closed the Gupta-linked VR Laser company accounts – so much for it all being about “white” monopoly capital!). This has nothing to do with what is required in order to build a financial sector that will serve the needs of the overwhelming majority of our people. It is important that we remind ourselves of some of the key demands and objectives in our struggle for the transformation of the financial sector.

The SACP, working with COSATU, must seek to mobilise workers, across federations, to embark on mass action calling for an end to the investment strike by capital, and especially finance capital. We must also continue to put pressure for resources in the financial sector to be increasingly and significantly invested into the productive sectors of our economy. As part of this we must renew our call for legislation on prescribed assets and community reinvestment by the financial sector.

An important campaign that we need to take up once more is that of the diversification of the financial sector by consolidating publicly-owned Development Finance Institutions ensuring that they have a developmental mandate aligned with the imperatives of RET. The licensing and moves towards giving financial backing to the Postbank represent progress for which the SACP has consistently campaigned. Re-capitalising the Postbank must be a major step towards placing it once more as the key role-player in social grant payments. Co-operative banking must also be supported. It is completely unhealthy, and radical economic transformation cannot be realised, if our banking sector for instance is so highly monopolised. South Africa requires micro-credit to support the informal sector, SMMEs and co-operatives.

Again, working closely with COSATU, the SACP must reach out to other progressive worker federations and unions to campaign for progressive and developmental investment of workers pension and provident funds.

In many ways the struggle for the transformation of the financial sector must be the anchor of our participation in the struggle for RET. And it is against this background that we must ensure that the long overdue financial sector summit is convened during the second half of this year.

We should not abandon campaigning on consumer issues in the financial sector – the predatory behaviour of Credit Bureaux, reckless lending, the financialisation of everything, omashonisa, bank charges, etc.

Reindustrialisation

The character of production has changed, mainly through out-contracting or contract manufacturing. There are high-end firms that no longer own the means of production that used to employ wage labour, but now own Intellectual Property (IP) and employ professionals and facilities for innovation, research and development, production commissioning and product marketing. This has become more important in value capture from production surplus by high-end firms compared to those firms that they outsource manufacturing to. The latter own production machinery, though in other instances not the tooling (which is still owned by high-end firms), and employ wage (production) labour. It is important to take this change into account both in terms of our approach to ownership transformation and reindustrialisation.

Flowing from the above, objective conditions still dictate that we continue mobilising Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to build, expand and diversify manufacturing. But in line with the concept of de-linking as discussed in *Going to the root*, we must not subordinate our independence and democratic national sovereignty to the dictates of foreign capital. Linked with this is the struggle to transform the financial sector to among others direct investment into productive activity.

It is also equally important, if perhaps not more important to increase investment in innovation, research and development, pursue curriculum transformation and improve both quality and teaching and learning outcomes. We must significantly surpass the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) target of 1 percent gross domestic expenditure on research and development (GERD). According to a UNESCO's study published in September 2014, at that time our GERD was 0.7 percent. There was no radical increase.

We must pay greater attention to, and increase the number of learners, college and university graduates (including post-graduate qualifications) in mathematics, technology, natural and life sciences to pursue scientific solutions through made-in-SA IP (encompassing product and production process inventions, discoveries and designs). This should be seen as one of the ingredients for ownership change and driving manufacturing expansion and diversification to alter the colonial character of our production structure and international trade. Developing the local market and regional integration are critical in this regard as well.

All of the above are essential in building capacity to participate productively in the transition of the world economy to the fourth industrial revolution. Without this we will enter the terrain as consumers, which will not be sustainable. But linked with this we need to be clear about which jobs this process of industrial change will destroy and which ones it will create. We must accordingly drive a "future skills" revolution.



Land and agrarian transformation

RET must speed up land redistribution. But, we must assist historically disadvantaged people who already have land to use it productively. This requires support in the form of capacity building, training, inputs, equipment, water supply, and monitoring to ensure productive results at maximum levels. We must guard against collapsing production in the name of radical land redistribution. We need to return to the many themes we took up during our Red October campaigns on land and agrarian transformation, for example building people's land committees.

We must also broaden the land issue to include the struggle over urban land, which in many respects is even more and increasingly central.

It is therefore going to be important that in the struggle for RET, the SACP must play its vanguard role by correctly framing the main content of this struggle, premised on the interrelationship between class, race and gender in RET. We need to frame the South African economic problem in terms of all these three.

The SACP, in its driving of RET, must forge alliances with progressive forces around a developmental agenda that will benefit the workers and poor. It must also be on the back of this that the Party must seek to support the building of a patriotic professional cadre, committed to build and industrialised RSA, and not reliant and dependent on debt to sustain its unaffordably high standards of living.

The state of the state: The balance of forces in the state and the movement

In order to achieve the goals of RET we require a strong movement (including the Allies) that is capable of mobilising all the progressive forces to drive this task. No transformation of any economy for the benefit of the workers and the poor has ever genuinely taken place without such a revolutionary movement. Much as the state has an important role to play, often state power isolated from mass power can quickly degenerate into bureaucracy and voluntarism. It is like some of our comrades who think that because we have state power we can simply legislate that blacks must own 70% of the mines and half the wealth in the JSE! It is as if the capitalist class will simply take this lying down. Unless there is mass pressure, state power is important, but with its own limitations as well.

Because of the importance of the state it is going to be important for the SACP going into our Congress to analyse the key features of the current state, 23 years after the 1994 democratic breakthrough. Indeed there is a debate on whether one can firmly characterise a particular state, as it is a subject of ongoing contestations and changing balance of forces. On the other hand trying to firmly characterise a particular state can lose sight of the state as a contested entity and blinds one to the nature of those contestations. Doing the two things – characterising a contested state – is not necessarily in contradiction.

One key feature of the South African state is that, as pointed out above, it is underpinned by a stubborn colonial growth path. Coupled with the 1994 democratic breakthrough the South African state can be characterised as some kind of liberal democratic state founded upon an untransformed capitalist economy.

There are perhaps 4 broad political strands that are in contestation of the current South African state.

Progressive developmentalism:

The first is what one may refer to as a bloc of progressive developmentalists, mainly located inside our movement, who would like to build a state that is responsive and influenced by the workers and poor of our country. In this bloc one would also include communists, as well as non-communist progressives. It is a bloc committed to an industrial policy, progressive land and agrarian reform and determined in fighting corruption.

Liberalism:

The second broad strand is that of a bloc of liberal democratic forces. This bloc would straddle a few political parties and is found within the ranks of our own alliance. But it can roughly be divided into two; a right-liberal bloc, represented in the main by the DA and committed to the Washington consensus (insofar as the Washington consensus, post-Trump, even exists). The other, of a liberal social democratic bent, believes in capitalism with a conscience, with some welfarist measures to cushion the poor from the vagaries of unbridled capital accumulation.

'Left' opportunism and populism:

There is then a 'left' opportunist bloc outside of our movement that sees widespread nationalisation as a solution to all the problems. Some in this bloc believe that the national democratic revolution has been abandoned and often call for an immediate transition to socialism whilst not saying how it will do so. One of the key features of what we call the 'left' populist or 'left' opportunism, is their use of pseudo-left language to advance an argument that an advance towards socialism is instantly possible. They relied on examples of the advances in Venezuela and Brazil in trying to urge society towards blindly following such practices, ending up with calls for a 'Lula moment'.

The parasitic bourgeoisie and right-wing populism:

The fourth strand is that of the parasitic bourgeoisie and its right-wing, often voluntaristic populism, whose goal is to use the levers of the state to pursue an agenda of accumulation, and often involving family networks. Of concern is the emerging alliance between this group and elements from the apartheid security forces, with the beginnings of signs of an emergence of securocrats in the state. This class is represented by what has now become a faction in our movement, heavily reliant on patronage, but losing its hegemony both inside and outside the movement.

All these strands, in one form or another, are to be found inside our own movement. The question of the balance of the analysis of the balance of forces becomes complicated. This is as result of the fact that in class terms, the bourgeoisie and monopoly capital has a presence in more than one of these political strands, and sometimes different fractions of capital, both domestic and international, work with sections in these political strands. For instance there have been instance of collaboration between monopoly capital and the parasitic bourgeoisie like in the case of the SABC and its archives.

It is also for the above reasons that the SACP will have to avoid the dangers of thinking of monopoly capital for instance as a monolithic force without its own internal contradictions. We need to assert a concrete analysis of the various class forces in South African society.

However, what we can say with certainty in the current period is that the balance of forces is not in favour of the working class. The fact that we have a fragmented labour movement, and a COSATU just coming out of a very difficult period has weakened the working class. The fact that in the major debates taking place there is no decisive working class voice points to this weakness. And the struggles of organised workers have gone moribund. This is perhaps one of the most serious matters that should be occupying the Party at our 14th Congress. The influence and impact of the working class can only be felt through its mass power and activism. The fact that the working class is largely absent or fragmented in the struggles against parasitism and the bourgeoisie in general is another sign of its weaknesses.

Mobilisation of and uniting the working class is one of the most immediate tasks of the SACP if we are to decisively shift the balance of forces. This is not going to be a short term task but needs to be understood within the context of our a medium- to long-term strategy. The question of the electoral strategy must not be looked at in isolation from an appreciation of the balance of forces and the

fundamental importance to deepen the struggle to tilt it in favour of the working class. Adventurism is not our road to take.

Opportunities and threats in the SACP's electoral considerations

Two PBC meetings ago, it was suggested that maybe we need to undertake a thorough analysis of the political tasks and choices facing the SACP currently and in the coming period, as well as opportunities and threats, especially associated with electoral choices facing the Party. This is also necessitated by some objective realities that are facing our revolution at this point in time:

- The factionalist battles inside our broader movement are putting a lot of pressure on the SACP in particular. The highest point of this pressure was in the lead up to the local government elections in many localities especially eThekweni in KZN. The SACP was under pressure to register to participate in the elections on its own
- Since then there is increasing pressure both from inside and outside our ranks for the SACP to consider itself as a new home or to be in alliance with those cadres who feel alienated from the ANC but still see themselves as part of our movement
- There are a growing number of communists and non-communists who feel that the ANC in particular is losing its political and moral authority amongst some of its members and voters
- There is near consensus inside of the SACP that the current modalities in the functioning of the Alliance since 1994 have now exhausted themselves. There is a strong feeling that contesting elections together as allies, but leaving key decisions in the hands of the ANC alone is no longer acceptable. In fact deepening factionalism and the corruption of internal organisational processes have further bedevilled Alliance relations

These are real pressures that we cannot and should not ignore. But at the same time we need to ask ourselves some fundamental questions, both of a strategic and tactical nature, including the following:

- Can the SACP take as fundamental a decision to participate in elections in its own right purely based on reactions to the pressures as outlined above? Rather is the fundamental question that we need to answer not the one on how will SACP electoral participation advance the struggle for radical economic transformation within the broader context of the struggles to move the NDR onto a second, more radical phase and socialism?
- Can we be able to change the situation inside our movement and the Alliance without a fundamental reconfiguration of the ANC? Related to this is the fact that reconfiguration of the Alliance is not a boardroom exercise, but a function of struggles on the ground and shifting the balance of forces
- Or even further, can we reconfigure the Alliance inside or outside it or both?
- Has the ANC fatally lost its capacity to unite and lead the motive forces of the national democratic revolution? If so how and why? And do we think the ANC can no longer be saved from itself?
- How does the SACP, on its own relate to non-communist but progressive forces, in our movement and broader society, whilst avoiding some of the mistakes we may have committed since 1994, but especially since around the Polokwane conference?



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Our Strategic Tasks: Now and Over the Next Ten Years

**If our liberation struggle was so expensive, how has it become so cheap?
Is the NDR in an interregnum? What is to be done?**

(SACP 13th Congress CC, Augmented Plenary Session, December 2016)

Revolution means to have a sense of history; it is changing everything that must be changed; it is full equality and freedom; it is being treated and treating others like human beings; it is achieving emancipation by ourselves and through our own efforts; it is challenging powerful dominant forces from within and without the social and national milieu; it is defending the values in which we believe at the cost of any sacrifice; it is modesty, selflessness, altruism, solidarity and heroism; it is fighting with courage, intelligence and realism; it is never lying or violating ethical principles; it is a profound conviction that there is no power in the world that can crush the power of truth and ideas. Revolution means unity; it is independence, it is fighting for our dreams of justice for Cuba and for the world, which is the foundation of our patriotism, our socialism and our internationalism. – **Fidel Castro, May Day 2000**

Is the NDR in an interregnum?

The fundamental structural challenge facing the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) is our capitalist economy. The key constraint is that of seeking to drive radical socio-economic transformation on a terrain of a highly monopolised, semi-colonial capitalist trajectory. It is a semi-colonial economic trajectory with stubborn structural features of unemployment, inequality and poverty. It is important that for us as the SACP this must be the point of departure in our analyses of the challenges facing our revolution. But it is also a capitalist economy with its own unique and peculiar historical features whose evolution and manifestations must be properly grasped in all the phases of the evolution of our struggle.

It was primarily in response to this reality that the ANC Mangaung Conference came up with a strategic programme to drive a second, more radical, phase of our transition. However, for a variety of reasons, the ANC and the Alliance have failed to give coherent content and direction to this 'second phase'. The SACP is the only organisation that made a serious attempt on this score and sought to engage its own structures and the Alliance on its paper "Going to the root". However this was also not very successful and there seemed to be little appetite for engagement on this matter. Why?

The SACP has spent most of this year trying to answer the above and other related questions, including the al-important question of what is to be done. Perhaps let us (re)-pose some of these questions as part of laying a foundation for political discussion in this Augmented Central Committee (ACC). Most importantly, discussions on these matters must also lay a basis for some of our Congress discussion

documents. In particular, we have said that one of the key discussions in the run up to our Congress, and one of the outcomes from the 14th Congress itself, must be the identification of key strategic tasks of the SACP in the next 10 years.

If the NDR is indeed in an interregnum, what are the reasons for this and what is to be done? What are the character and some of the defining features of this interregnum? Is this interregnum not also a reflection of a possible (deepening of the) rupture in the (multiclass) consensus (since 1994) around the NDR itself? And is the rupture in the consensus of an ideological or organisational character? Or is it both? If the SACP is correct in arguing that the 3 August electoral losses could be a reflection of the ANC's inability to win hegemony over and lead the main motive forces of our revolution, could this perhaps be a reflection of the rupture in the consensus amongst those motive forces? Let us seek to answer this latter question a bit more closely and in some detail, as part of laying a basis for what is to be done.

If our observation is correct that all we did in the ANC's Polokwane Conference was to deal with the symptom and not the fundamental causes of the problems besetting our movement, what then are these fundamental causes? To pursue the idea that we possibly are seeing a rupture in the consensus around the National Democratic Revolution, we need to go back to the past history of our liberation movement to illustrate how this consensus has been forged over decades, as well as where things could have started going wrong. But an historical overview also gives us another vantage point to look at the challenges we have and the way ahead.

One of the most significant developments of the 20th century in South Africa was the formation of the ANC in 1912. This was the primary foundation stone, which was to later become a significant factor in building a consensus around the NDR. Perhaps the ANC's biggest historical achievement was its ability to unite the African people across tribal divisions. This is an achievement we dare not underestimate as many progressive and promising revolutions faltered on the altar of tribal and ethnic divisions.

The unity of the African majority still remains a solid foundation for building a new, united non-racial nation. Without undermining the huge and impressive achievements of the Cuban revolution, I was however struck by the fact that one of the contributory factors to the unity of the Cuban people is a single language – Spanish, from Havana to Santiago de Cuba! The ANC had a much more complex task on this score, uniting different language and cultural groups and truly making itself 'Umbutho weSizwe' building a consensus by uniting African people (As one liberation struggle song said: uMZulu, uMXhosa, MoSotho hlanganani!). The task of uniting the African people remains an important one in refashioning and cementing the consensus around the NDR, and the SACP must also play its vanguard role in this regard in relation to especially the unity of the working class, and forging a progressive middle class committed to build a developmental public service in particular.

Much as the formation of the SACP was a significant development for the working class of our country to build its own political vanguard, it was the CPSA's 1929 Native Republic Thesis calling for the establishment of a native republic as a stage towards a socialist republic that really grounded the Party strategically within the South African context. This was the first such explicit articulation of the relationship between the struggle for liberation of black people, and a socialist republic. It was a far reaching resolution that laid the foundation for the emergence of the very early origins of the idea of majority rule with an essentially African government and social formation but with democratic rights for all. It was an important contribution to the forging of a revolutionary consensus.

The Native Republic Thesis also gave very explicit tasks to the Communist Party in relation to the 'national movements':

"The Party should pay particular attention to the embryonic national organisations among the natives, such as the African National Congress. The Party, while retaining its full independence, should participate in these organisations, should seek to broaden and extend their activity. Our aim should be to transform the ANC into a fighting nationalist revolutionary organisation against the white bourgeoisie and the British imperialists, based upon the trade unions, peasant organisations, etc, developing systematically the leadership of the workers and the Communist Party in this organisation. The development of a national-revolutionary movement of the toilers of South Africa against the white bourgeoisie and British imperialism, constitutes one of the major tasks of the Communist Party of South Africa".

However the decade of the 1920s in South Africa was characterised by significant mass urban and rural struggles led by the Industrial Commercial Union (ICU), which though it was a trade union in form, acted more as a broader militant and mass movement combining the struggles of workers, peasants, and particular labour tenants being evicted from white farms. In many respects the ICU in the 1920s played a much more effective and militant, broad movement role than the ANC at the time.

The national democratic revolutionary consensus was tested and forged through trying times and in the crucible of struggles and big debates and disagreements both within and between the ANC and the SACP. The disagreements were paramount immediately after the adoption of this thesis and the SACP's decision to work with and build the ANC. In the 1930s, both the ANC and the SACP were weakened, partly because of the debilitating nature of the debates around a way forward in the struggle against white colonial rule. Ideological debates within the SACP were also preoccupied by analysis of class struggles in Europe and the rise of fascism in the 1930s, especially in Germany and Italy.

It was the election of a new leadership core of the SACP around Moses Kotane in 1939 that created conditions for taking the SACP out of its debilitating internal factionalist battles, whose intentions centred on the clarion call contained in the famous 'Cradock Letter', written by Kotane in 1934. This laid the basis for the revitalisation of a campaigning SACP in the 1940s on a number of fronts, including intensified work in building a progressive and militant trade union movement, but also beginning to take up struggles affecting particularly African communities, reaching out and working with Indian and Coloured communities as well.

The new Kotane leadership, perhaps on evaluating a decade of trying to work with the ANC, decided to encourage African party cadres to join the ANC directly as members and also stand to be elected for leadership positions in the ANC. Perhaps this was out of realisation that seeking to influence the ANC only from outside was not yielding the desired effect of radicalising the ANC. This formed another crucial dimension of the consensus around the NDR, the principle of dual membership by members of the SACP, not only in the trade union movement but also in the ANC itself. Although this was not a new practice in the SACP, it was now elevated to a higher level in relation to the ANC, and therefore an important development in the history of our revolution.

Of particular importance is how the Party, over and above its work in building and supporting progressive trade unions, was also involved in the building of what it referred to at the time as national movements, primarily the ANC. In the 1940s the CPSA continued its traditions of developing internal capacity for political education, using some of the cadres that had gone to the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s for political education and exposure to socialist construction. The SACP revitalised its 1920s practice of **night schools for the political education of its cadres** on a larger scale in the

1940s. This later became a key element in the NDR - the education of the cadres of the movement as a whole beyond just the communist party, especially during the 30 years of illegality of both the ANC and the SACP.

It was no accident therefore that the apartheid regime, on ascending to power in 1948, targeted the Communist Party as its most immediate enemy and banned it in 1950 through the Suppression of Communism Act. It was also the strongest component of the fledgling liberation movement at the time. The CPSA's mass and militant activism and struggles during its golden decade of the 1940s had a direct effect on the ANC, which had largely still remained an organisation of petitions. One of the mass actions that had a huge impact on the ANC and the movement as a whole was the great 1946 mineworkers' strike led by communist leader JB Marks and other communists. The Transvaal and Natal Indian Congress passive resistance campaigns against group area removals, which were also led by Communists, were another important contribution to a more active and mass campaigning ANC.

The radical programme adopted by the ANC and deriving from the ANC Youth League's 1949 programme of action, was directly influenced by the Party led activism of the 1940s.

The 1950s was a particularly significant decade in defining and shaping the direction of the NDR, as well as deepening the consensus, through separate, but complementary, mass activism as well as joint programmes of action – all leading to the formalisation of the Congress Alliance committed to non-racialism, both in active struggle and in principle for building a new South African society. These were key components in cementing the consensus around the unfolding democratic revolution. During the 1950s in particular there were also important rural struggles, although the evolving democratic revolution in South Africa was largely led by the struggles of the **urban working class**.

One of the most important developments of the 1950s was the adoption of the **Freedom Charter**. Though the idea of collective demands of the majority of South Africans came from the ANC, the Congress of the People deliberately involved the entire Congress movement. The Charter in many ways laid the foundation for a broader Congress consensus about the demands of the South African people, with a conceptualisation of an alternative South African society.

A major advance in defining a theoretical and programmatic articulation of the consensus around the NDR is contained in the SACP's 1962 Programme, the South African Road to Freedom. This programme achieved a number of things simultaneously:

- Most importantly, it sought to resolve a nagging question that had not been adequately addressed since 1929 as to what was the main character of the South Africa's capitalist political economy. The 1962 programme conceptualised this as **Colonialism of a Special Type**. The CST concept wove together three interrelated strands of national liberation struggle which had been implicit but un-developed in the 1929 Native Republic thesis:
- From the mid-1930s (and moving away from the Native Republic Thesis) the CPSA had tended to conceptualise racial oppression in SA as a version of fascism. (See, for instance, Brian Bunting's book on the emergence of the National Party – The Rise of the South African Reich). This strategic perspective corresponded to the Communist International's 1935 shift of emphasis away from an anti-imperialist focus to popular fronts against emerging fascism in Europe. The SACP's 1962 CST thesis returned our strategic focus much more centrally and appropriately to the **colonial** nature of national oppression in SA.
- Closely related to the above the CST thesis helped to clarify the relationship between the national

and class struggles in South Africa, by embedding national oppression within the systemic relations of production of South African monopoly capital. This had been a central issue that had remained theoretically vague within SACP perspectives in the previous decades (see, for instance, Jack and Ray Simons' attempt in "Race, Class and Colour" – where "capitalism" is seen as the "economic base" and "national oppression" as an "ideological superstructure", an "ideological" hangover from the "frontier" past and in contradiction with the capitalist economic base.)

Understanding SA's pre-1994 political economy as CST also located our national liberation struggle within an internationalist struggle against imperialism in a new, post-1945 era. SA's late-19th century capitalist industrial revolution had established SA as a semi-peripheral capitalist economy within the imperialist chain. A South African NDR, it was now affirmed, had to be a struggle for national sovereignty and not an old-style national struggle led by an emerging national bourgeoisie. The 1962 programme helped shape the direction of our struggle, and firmly embedded the **concept of a NDR**. The programme also significantly shaped the first Strategy and Tactics of the ANC as adopted in Morogoro in 1969. Were it not for the Morogoro Conference and its resolutions, the ANC and the liberation movement as a whole would not have been able to give leadership to the resurgence of worker and youth struggles in the early to the mid 1970s. It probably would have been as moribund as the PAC, unable to use this ferment to intensify the offensive against the apartheid regime. The organisation of our struggle in the 1980s into the four key pillars proved to be one of the most important strategic and organisational factors in pushing back the apartheid regime (the armed struggle, the underground, the mass struggles and the international isolation of the apartheid regime).

The semi-insurrectionary period of the 1980s, marked by a fusion of workers, youth and community struggles introduced an important dimension into the NDR that of building people's power from below as a crucial driver in the NDR.

The 1994 democratic breakthrough and the consensus

Without by any means suggesting that there were no internal debates around the direction of the NDR prior to 1994, it was nevertheless after the 1994 democratic breakthrough that some serious discord began to develop over the consensus around the NDR.

The first deviation came only two years after the democratic breakthrough with an imposition of a neo-liberal economic policy. It was a neo-liberal deviation from which our revolution has not fully recovered from, and in fact has left very deep scars. It was an imposition declared non-negotiable, in a decision made by government and later imposed, without any discussion, as ANC policy.

The neo-liberal restructuring was also accompanied by a serious attempt after the ANC's 2002 National Conference to restructure the ANC itself, away from being a national liberation movement into a narrow electoralist parliamentary party, undermining the movement character of the ANC. This attempt was largely influenced by the "Third Way" political current associated with Blair, Schroeder and Bill Clinton – in effect the re-engineering of Labour/Social Democratic/Democratic parties away from their centre-left welfare orientation towards managerialist parties implementing neo-liberalism with a "human face", side-lining trade unions and shifting public social wage interventions into user-pay, privatised, debt-financed provision (the privatisation of Keynesianism).

The nature of a post-apartheid NDR and the appropriate organisational form of a sustained national liberation movement were already pre-figured in the debates of the 1980s, in, amongst other things, the differences around the character of MK. Those associated with Slovo, Hani and Comrade Mzala

argued for an MK that fused with the rolling-mass semi-insurrectionary struggles of the 1980s, others around Joe Modise saw MK much more as the nucleus of a future conventional army to be built up outside of the country. These strategic differences within the ANC/MK were never resolved, but represented two different perspectives on the future – the one appreciating the necessity for ongoing organs of popular power in a post-apartheid South Africa, the other having a much more state-centred approach to a future SA.

Similar divergences were detectable in the debate over whether to sustain the MDM structures associated with the UDF, or their collapse into centralised organisations. The latter view prevailed with serious and persisting problems in the civic, women's and youth sectors.

From 1993 these strategic and organisational differences were also played out around the interpretation of the RDP: the Mbeki-ites stressing the "people-centred", "top-down" delivery state character of the RDP (but not its equally explicit "people-driven" aspirations). After 1994 the SACP and the ANC national secretariat sought to develop localised MDM-type RDP Councils, but the 1996 Class Project marginalised both the RDP and any mass-based organisational mobilisation around it. .

A central plank of the Mbeki-ite drive to reconfigure the NLM and ANC as a state-centric, bureaucratic, narrowly electoralist formation was to marginalise the SACP in particular and to transform Cosatu into a narrow trade union formation. There were venomous attacks by both President Mandela and Mbeki on the SACP at our 8th Congress in 1998. Secondly, though Cde Mandela was having his own political irritations with the SACP, (and later apologised for the imposition of Gear), Cde Mbeki was driven by a desire to sideline and ultimately weaken the SACP and destroy the Alliance.

During Cde Mbeki's Presidency of the ANC there was large scale factionalist marginalisation of the SACP and Cosatu as well as those who were not part of a circle closer to him. What also started developing was a system of patronage characterised by factionalist deployment into key positions in the state. The Black Economic Empowerment process, which was not only narrow and elitist, but also got captured by these patronage networks thus benefitting those closer to the Mbeki faction to the exclusion of 'outsiders'.

Although the ANC had always had different internal tendencies and sometimes groupings, but it was during Mbeki's era that provincially based factionalism that drove the national behaviour of the ANC begun to take hold. And there was also a close relationship between factionalism and patronage, as factions were less based on ideological differences, but increasingly based on access to resources and means of accumulation.

It was also after the 1994 democratic breakthrough that there was serious neglect and decline of both mass mobilisation and cadre development. These two are usually the first casualties of factionalism, as a cadre independently capable of mobilising the people on an ongoing basis and also further developed through political education is not easily malleable to factionalist manipulation. It is not in the interests of factionalists to educate cadres and to undertake ongoing mass mobilisation.

In Polokwane the ANC removed Mbeki, but never really tackled these underlying problems. In fact, from the Port Elizabeth National General Council (NGC) in 2000 till the 2014 NGC, if not earlier in the Mahikeng Conference in 1997, all the ANC political and organisational reports had already identified many of the problems besetting the organisation. However, the main problem is that there has been very little, if any, action that has been taken to address these problems, such that they have now possibly mutated to the extent of threatening to swallow the organisation itself. For example, the problem of factionalism and slates has long been identified, but each conference and NGC is

followed by many branch meetings, regional and provincial conferences beset by the same problems. For instance, right after the last NGC, all ANC or League conferences held have been characterised by slate politics with no action from any of the ANC structures, especially the National Executive Committee.

If our liberation struggle was so expensive, why has it become so cheap?

Our Central Committee discussion document published in the last edition of the African Communist outlines, fairly comprehensively the serious problems besetting the ANC, our movement and revolution in the current period:

- Money-driven factionalism has become so entrenched in the movement such that in some regions it is leading to intra-ANC assassinations in the lead up to the recent August 3 local government elections. Over 20 such assassinations occurred, illustrating the extent to which large parts of our movement have been corrupted;
- The deepening grip of the parasitic bourgeoisie on parts of the state, especially in the SOEs, is exemplified by the recent revelation that the head of the Gupta family is now the seventh richest person in South Africa! The Guptas have not made their wealth through expanding and developing the forces of production, they have made their wealth through parasitic milking of public resources. If there has been any denial of the reality of the corporate capture of the state for purposes of private accumulation from both inside and outside our movement, Atul Gupta's ranking in the top ten wealthiest South Africans is the decisive counter proof!
- The corporate capture of much of the ANC's institutional machinery has become endemic, manifesting itself in, amongst other things, brazen manipulation of internal elections, membership lists, deployments, etc;
- Not since 2007 have we seen such signs of division amongst national leadership and wilful bypassing of ANC and Cabinet mandated positions on matters relating to the SABC, SAA, digital migration, nuclear energy and the so-called Zwane task team on the banks. There is a climate of recklessness and a 'don't care' attitude in many of our parastatals, including violations of the rule of law and basic governance protocols.

However, the untransformed semi-colonial economic trajectory is the principal foundation from which corruption derives. Given the high levels of poverty and unemployment, access to a political position in the movement becomes access to some form of 'employment' and access to resources. The difficulty in entering the highly monopolistic economy, unless assisted by government, and lack of other economic opportunities outside the mainstream economy reinforces competition and manipulation of processes to access ANC and therefore governmental positions. This constitutes the objective reasons for corruption in our movement and society. Therefore a more radical transformation and de-monopolisation of our economy is an essential condition to fight corruption and factionalism in our state and organisations.

Therefore the interregnum is principally driven by a state of protracted stagnation in both our economy and a paralysed national leadership of the ANC, incapable of confronting corruption and especially unable to drive a more radical phase of our transition through confronting both monopoly capital and the parasitic bourgeoisie that threatens to take over our movement.

The situation would have been much worse with a likely decline into a failed state situation if, post-2009, a left axis in the state, led by the SACP, had not used the post-Polokwane opening, particularly in the first Zuma administration (2009-2014), to drive a range of important radical transformative

programmes and, on the other hand, to block or at the very least expose and delay some of the worst corporate capture initiatives.

It is very important that we collectively and self-critically assess the performance of leading SACP personalities in the executive and legislatures over the 2009 to 2016 period – not least because part of the EFF/NUMSA as well as mainstream media anti-Party line is that SACP personalities have been sitting comfortably but captured in senior government positions (and, so the argument goes, the only reason why the Party is now speaking up against Zuma is that we have “fallen out”, or fear losing positions in 2019).

Among the key SACP-led, left axis initiatives have been:

A significant impact on overall economic policy orientation

In particular, the left axis in government post-2009 has succeeded in shifting government from a neo-liberal posture on state owned companies and trade policy to a developmental policy largely embodied in the New Growth Path with explicit jobs goals. Two million new jobs have been created since the adoption of the NGP in 2010, despite a global economic crisis that reduced demand for SA minerals.

Labour Policy – the left axis helped to shift labour policy from an emerging strategy that favoured dismantling key protections of workers to strengthened labour laws on labour-broking and short-term contracts, expanded coverage through UIF for workers who became unemployed, minimum wages for farm and domestic workers and a new minimum wage is being developed.

Competition policy – the left axis in government shifted competition policy away from an administrative processing of mergers to an active tool to combat collusion and cartels (in key sectors like fertilisers, bread, poultry, construction). The shift also saw a globally innovative approach to imposing employment and other developmental conditions when companies sought to buy or sell another company (Walmart, Coca-Cola, AB InBev, Clicks). Other mergers were blocked (Vodacom and Neotel) and abuse of market power was acted against (SASOL, Media 24). Monopoly capital abuses in other sectors have been investigated (private health, gas, grocery retail); and measures to criminalise cartels and collusion have been implemented.

Trade policy – Post-2009 SA has emerged as a global leader in developing progressive trade policy from a developing country perspective. We have made trade policy a tool of **industrialisation** and shifted away from the free-trade model, introducing employment as a key criteria in tariff considerations; re-oriented trade with the global South (STAT), and increased exports to the rest of Africa.

In the face of the **Global Recession** the left axis in government developed and implemented measures to shift the economy out of recession in 2009, including a fund to retrain workers instead of re-trenching them; and a fund for companies in distress (R6,1bn).

Infrastructure development – the left axis played the leading role in increasing the scale and scope of infrastructure investment with additional funding, a new coordinating structure (the Presidential Infrastructure Co-ordinating Council); and an integrated approach to delivery (18 SIPs); linking local manufacture of components to infrastructure projects (buses, wind-towers, solar units, etc.)

Industrial funding – the left axis in government was central to driving increased industrial funding by the IDC by more than 100%. A major focus has been the funding of green energy projects, and a focus on a black (productive) industrialists programme.

Localisation – the left axis in government has driven localisation programs, among them the return of taxi-production to SA (the units were previously imported); the development of a new designation of products for the localisation of all state procurement (clothing, textiles and footwear, furniture, canned foods, etc).

Sector development – the left axis in government shifted the clothing, textile and footwear sector from a sector in rapid decline, losing 20,000 jobs a year to a stable sector maintaining employment of around 150,000 workers; supported food-processing and beverages through measures on trade, competition and industrial funding, resulting in a growth of employment in the sector; and rescued Scaw Metals when Anglo sold it; introduced a pricing mechanism to support local use of scrap metal; supported beneficiation, particularly through resourcing the development of fuel cell technology.

The spatial economy – overcoming CST geography

Pre-2009 it was the SACP that led the way in calling for a strategic focus on transforming the spatial political economy of apartheid – in particular through integrated urban policy, linking transport planning with housing, and transforming the Housing Department into a Human Settlement Department. While progress has been uneven since, at least these strategic priorities are now generally recognised.

Post-school education and training

Since 2009 there has been a massive expansion of student numbers and of public spending on university and vocational training. The huge expansion of student numbers, a major achievement in itself, has of course brought its own challenges (notably around affordability).

Towards a social/solidarity economy and the right to work

Over the 2009-2014 and the present administration, the left-axis in government has helped to shift strategic thinking away from the mistaken idea of a “well-performing” “first economy” and a laggard “second economy”, towards a different approach to “informality”, SMMEs, co-ops, and public employment programs – conceptualising these as elements of a potentially de-linked social or solidarity economy in which use values (assets and services) for working class and popular strata and communities, rather than profit-maximisation and integration into monopoly-dominated “value chains” is the strategic priority. SA’s globally innovative public employment programmes in which the public sector is the employer of last resort have now expanded to over 1 million work opportunities a year, or some 220,000 in employment per day.

This is an incomplete list of left-axis strategic interventions in government since 2009 (we need to expand it and further assess it in preparation for our 2017 national congress).

The question will be asked, however: If the SACP-led left axis within government was relatively successful in the above interventions, why are we still suffering from crisis levels of inequality, poverty and unemployment?

There are two fundamental factors:

1. The 2009, post-Polokwane relative breakthrough for the SACP and left axis at a government level, coincided with the impact on our domestic economy of the global capitalist crisis and particularly the dramatic end of the commodity super-cycle. The contra-factual is extremely relevant in this regard: If the post-2009 left axis in government had not been relatively successful in driving the above strategic initiatives the situation would certainly have been much worse.

Unlike Brazil, for instance, our economy is not in recession. Unlike Australia, we have not lost our auto manufacturing sector. And despite crisis-levels of unemployment, it is our public employment programs that have consistently seen job growth, as with this week's announcement of the Quarterly Employment Statistics which show "community and social services" (ie: public employment) once more contributing the majority of new jobs (78 000).

2. While the 2007 anti-neoliberal ANC revolt at Polokwane created significant new space for SACP cadres in government deployments in President Zuma's first administration (2009-14) and, perhaps to a lesser extent in the current second Zuma administration, there was always a deliberate attempt to check and counter-balance SACP influence in government. In essence, there was an attempt to triangulate and therefore contain the three major tendencies within the movement:
 - The left axis;
 - The comprador "new tendency" (with whom the left axis had struck a marriage of convenience at Polokwane); and
 - The significant remnants of the 1996 class project who had not left for business, or departed to COPE.

In the 2009-14 administration, while SACP (and ex-Cosatu) deployees were located in key economic portfolios, Treasury remained firmly within the legacy of the Mbeki 1996 class project era. The SACP had campaigned for a central planning capacity, this was half-conceded (but in the shape of a non-governmental National Planning Commission), and it was equally handed over to the 1996 class project. Meanwhile key SOEs, and most of the social sector ministries went to "new tendency", and often parasitic bourgeois elements. As for the security cluster the SACP was entirely excluded from there.

The left axis-led interventions noted above were, therefore, often constrained by counter-balancing interventions, which meant that a thorough-going radical second phase of the NDR, capable of sustained transformative momentum was compromised.

Contrariwise, we should also note, in this context, that many SACP comrades deployed into key portfolios - for example, in communications (both in the executive and in parliament), or in energy put up tough resistance to corporate capture and were eventually demoted or forced to resign. However, if they had not fought against corporate parasitism, even larger scale looting and degeneration into failed state status would have been accelerated.

Once again, it is important to assert and develop these analyses to counter the claim that SACP cadres in government have been passive, comfortable prisoners of a "hyena state", and that the Party "has only woken up recently" for fear of losing positions.

It is also important to note a shift in the alignment of forces between the first Zuma administration 2009-14, and the current post-2014 administration. This latter administration has been marked by even more aggressive and reckless interventions by the Gupta-captured network, which often conducts itself as a shadowy, parallel state outside of collective cabinet discipline and above any answerability to Parliament or the ANC. Part of this recklessness is attributable to a sense that things are not assured for them beyond 2019; and part of the recklessness is the desperation of those for whom the net is closing in as scandals pile up.

The growing recklessness of this parasitic tendency, and its attacks particularly on Treasury, has opened up better possibilities for a re-calibrated relationship between the left-axis and Treasury. The sacking of former Finance Minister Nene and attacks on SARS have further isolated this tendency from a wide range of middle-of-the-road ANC NEC members, ANC stalwarts and ex-MK combatants.

But the reckless arrogance of the parasitic tendency in government has also been given some leeway by the weaknesses of Cosatu and its inevitable inward-looking preoccupation over the past two or three years.

And, finally, while the SACP-led axis in government has done relatively well over the past seven years, the SACP's mass campaigning work has not reached the levels of the early 2000s and, for instance, the original Financial Sector Campaign. Going forward we need to ensure a better balance between our mass work and our leadership role within the state.

Integrally linked to the above is perhaps another reality that the organisational form taken by the Alliance since 1994 has exhausted itself and is no longer able to be the bedrock upon which to drive a second phase of our transition. We need to ask bigger questions of whether all of our Alliances formations' organisational methods aren't outdated. For example why is our movement's leadership and authority absent in the current student protests or unable to provide leadership on these.

The key strategic tasks of the SACP in the NDR over the next 10 years

The key strategic task over the next ten years is the mobilisation of the principal motive forces of the revolution to drive a radical second phase of our NDR, with the SACP at the centre of this task. The main vehicle for this must be a rebuilding of a militant working class-led popular movement made up of all those forces with an interest in a radicalised programme of transformation to benefit workers and poor of our country.

A radical working class movement

For instance over the past 20 years the progressive trade union movement, especially Cosatu, and particularly industrial unions, have been fighting rearguard defensive battles, essentially against the neo-liberal restructuring of the workplace and our economy, linked to the effects of GEAR and the globalised developments of capitalism. Perhaps it is in the nature of the trade union movement to fight defensive battles against retrenchments, casualisation, labour brokers, privatisation, e-Tolls etc. These are by no means small struggles. But until the working class (within and beyond the trade unions) is integrally connected to a wider national democratic mobilisation and is organised politically as the working class and class force for itself, it won't as a class be able to turn defensive struggles (largely affecting the formally employed) into an offensive for radical economic transformation and the overall development of our country.

In the current situation facing our own country, no other class force is able to rise and provide leadership towards radical economic transformation of our country. South African monopoly capital is incapable of providing such leadership as its primary focus, both in the short and long term, is narrow profit maximisation and indeed expatriation of investments and assets. The BEE class that emerged out of narrow BEE is equally unable to lead because of its compradorial dependence on monopoly capital, largely in the mining and financial sectors, and also now facing narrowing opportunities in the light of a relative decline in the mining industry and deepening monopolisation in the financial sector.

The parasitic bourgeoisie is also unable to provide any leadership in driving economic transformation as its primary goal remains that of looting the state as a means of accumulation. Unions also have

intrinsic limitations. They are organised in the work-place, they tend to represent the more formally employed with marginalised sectors of the proletariat (farm-workers, domestic workers, the casualised, the under-employed and the unemployed) largely unorganised. This is one of the reasons why NUMSA's attempts to launch a vanguard workers' party and also an MDM-style United Front have been a failure (at least so far).

Building a radical and militant working class movement will require in the first instance the deepening and protection of our relationship with Cosatu. In addition the SACP needs to pay close attention to rebuilding Cosatu's industrial unions and expanding into unorganised areas.

However it is going to be important for the SACP to extend its work and engagements beyond Cosatu and seek to reach out to all organised workers. This will also help to contribute towards the one country one federation aspiration. However building a single union federation is not a board room exercise but requires the mobilisation of workers around common concrete demands. For example there are common aspirations of workers across federations and unions like fighting against labour brokers and casualisation, the transformation of the financial sector to invest in job creating activities, the industrialisation of our country and growing the productive sectors of our economy, including building worker co-operatives. It is specific demands and campaigns around these issues that the SACP should seek to encourage broader worker campaigning and co-operation as part of building a militant working class movement.

Another important matter around which to mobilise organised workers is that of fighting the parasitic bourgeoisie and rolling back its capture of the state and state owned entities. This is a campaign that has not been taken up by any of the unions both inside and outside Cosatu, and yet it poses one of the most serious threats to transformation and defending workers' gains. Incidentally those interested in the corporate capture of the state are targeting the capture of the very unions organising the areas or sectors of the state they are interested in.

To achieve the above requires that we seriously revitalise, resource and strengthen the SACP's Trade Union Commission and that it must report at least twice a year to the Central Committee, one of which must be at the Augmented Central Committee. The trade union commission must also have similar structures created at provincial and district levels. This Commission must develop a nationally co-ordinated programme to strengthen our bilateral relations with Cosatu and all its affiliates, as well as to reach out to all organised workers and their unions, especially those likely to accept a minimum programme of action to defend workers. This must also include intensified work amongst those unions that have left Cosatu for example Numsa and Fawu, while supporting the building of LIMUSA and other Cosatu initiatives to organise farm workers and other workers in the food industry.

Building a working class led popular movement

One of the observations we made in the analysis of the August 3 local elections was that the ANC (or even the Alliance) has lost contact with the principal motive forces of the NDR. Largely this is as a result of ANC structures, particularly branches and regions that are inward looking and focused on who is to be a councillor or a delegate to this or that conference. In the process the ANC has lost leadership of communities and capacity to address their needs.

The starting point for rebuilding a popular movement as part of the mobilisation of the motive forces of the NDR must start with engagement and joint activities with working class economic forms of organisation outside of the workplace. This must include the mobilisation of stokvels, burial societies, co-operatives, as well as building civic and residential organisations to take up community issues.

Localised struggles against evictions and the predatory behaviour of mashonisas are very important campaigns to pick up at local level. The best way to do this is not to drive these programmes from head office, other than overseeing and co-ordination, but to strengthen our branches and districts to reach out to these structures and take up their issues at local levels. Also it is important that we do not rush to create new structures as such, but start by reaching out, through programmes of action, to already existing institutions and organisations, with many facing enormous challenges and stresses.

The SACP must simultaneously seek to build a front of these popular forces at the same time as it seeks to rebuild the strength of the ANC. In fact it is by building such a popular front that we can contribute to building an ANC and SACP that are rooted amongst the people. The SACP must deliberately seek to play a leading role in building this front, as there are doubts on how capable the ANC is to successfully confront gate-keeping and corruption of its own internal processes. It is these very crooked practices that are now so entrenched in ANC structures that it turns many people against it, making it unable to lead a range of progressive forces in various localities. Such a popular front must both be in the ANC but independent at the same time.

Key and strategic policy interventions

There are a number of new policy areas and interventions that the SACP needs to pay particular attention to and also prepare some short position papers as we go to our Congress. These are not a replacement on our focus on the five priority areas of our revolution:

Building a layer of progressive and patriotic professionals and managers in the state

Every successful revolution requires the fostering and development of a patriotic, and often revolutionary, layer of professionals and public sector managers, capable of driving a progressive agenda to realise the objectives of such a revolution. But similarly every class society requires its own professional and managerial cadre to advance its own class interests in society.

For the SACP, it is therefore in our deepest interests that much as we seek to advance the revolutionary interests of the workers and poor of our country, we must simultaneously pay close attention to the struggle for a production of a patriotic cadre of professionals that are loyal to, and advancing the interests of, the consolidation of a NDR, with an inclination towards advancing the interests of the working class. This is not a task for some coming future, but a struggle that must be waged in the here and now.

It is precisely because every society, capitalist or socialist, and whatever its phase or stage of its struggle, requires such a professional cadre, and that is why such a professional or managerial cadre is a contested terrain. It was Marx and Engels who first pointed out that the middle and professional classes are a wavering class, subject to contestation by the principal class forces in a capitalist society, the bourgeoisie and the working class.

In every class and/or national liberation struggle, there is always a simultaneous struggle for the loyalty and winning over of the middle strata. In our own immediate struggle against the apartheid regime, there was a serious contest over especially the loyalties of the black middle strata, including the managerial and professional components of such strata.

Part of the struggle between the apartheid regime and the national liberation movement was that over winning the loyalties of these strata. This was a struggle over the loyalties of the, albeit relatively small, corporate middle stratum, the bantustan professional petty bourgeoisie and the professional layers of teachers, nurses and other professionals. Part of the shifting of the balance of forces in favour of the working class and the national liberation movement had a lot to do with the winning over by the liberation movement of significant layers of the professional and other sections of the black middle strata.

However, the defeat of the apartheid regime in 1994 did not mark an end to the class contestations in South African society, including the contestations over the emergent middle strata after 1994. This struggle in essence now involved the struggle over the loyalties of the black middle and professional strata between principally the capitalist class and the working class. It is a struggle that has simultaneously been fought between the emergent class forces in control of the post-1994 state, the dominant capitalist classes and the working class.

One of the most important class developments since 1994 is that there has arisen anew, an old class force – that of a parasitic bourgeoisie that is largely dependent on its hold over the state in order to pursue its accumulation interests. This is not a new class stratum, but it has now taken a new form that has relative autonomy from both the established capitalist classes and the working class. Its power derives from its hold over the (new post apartheid) state apparatuses. Its autonomy derives from this class stratum's privileged relationship to government and significant sections of the state. Perhaps the most significant aspect about this parasitic bourgeoisie is that it both has dependence but also relatively autonomy from the sections of established capitalist classes. It is its relative autonomy that is giving it power (and audacity) to try and dislodge the hold of the old monopoly capitalist classes from the state.

Let us take a brief detour to give a closer analysis of the parasitic bourgeoisie and the Gupta phenomenon in order to properly understand the threat posed by this to the production of a loyal layer of a professional and managerial cadre for the public sector. Capitalism has always created favourable conditions for speculation and corruption existing alongside mainstream accumulation. The primacy of private profit over social needs inherent in the system lies at the heart of this.

The current era of capitalist globalisation has massively increased opportunities for such tendencies. Greater mobility, financialisation, the proliferation of tax havens and greater opportunities for use of electronic transfers have opened up many more opportunities for speculative capitalists. And that is why all of a sudden the FICA Bill has become such a contested matter in our case.

The Gupta family can be identified as representing one form of speculative capitalism, in this case are highly dependent on corrupting decision makers within government and public entities. From what has emerged of their basic modus operandi, it is to exploit 'political influence' to gain access to resources, licences, contracts and tenders on favourable terms and then to divert large amounts of the profits accumulated to off-shore tax havens and accounts.

The activities and practices of such capitalist bootleggers can in no way be seen as any kind of progressive bulwark against the monopoly capitalist owners and controllers of the means of production, that remain the main adversary of the working class.

Gupta-style 'empowerment' focuses on enrichment of selected individuals who can fuel their own corrupt enrichment and transfer of loot off-shore. Decisions taken by such 'captured' individuals are expected to favour the specific interests of this group against the broader interests of transformation.

It is within the above context that many professionals and managers would be targeted by this rent-seeking behaviour thus corrupting them and undermining our goals to build a developmental state. The trade union leadership operating in parts of government and the public sector that are of interests to the parasitic bourgeoisie is also targeted for 'capture'. Another strategy of luring the sections of the professional and part of contesting is through offers of BEE type shareholding in certain companies.

Another challenge in this area relates to the fact that our civil service is not yet fully integrated from its past components from the central apartheid state and the Bantustans. In parts of our civil service elements from the old Bantustan services seem to be rising to occupy very key strategic positions in a manner that could pose a serious threat to the functionality of government and the state.

It is therefore important for the SACP to build capacity to drive a campaign for a clean and patriotic managerial and professional cadre in the public service. It is in the deepest interests of the workers and the poor that we have such a cadre.

To achieve the above will require, inter alia, that we forge a very close relationship with the public sector unions, primarily inside Cosatu, but also extend our engagements with other potentially progressive public sector unions that are outside Cosatu, in line with the strategic perspectives advanced earlier.

The rise of populism; the political dimensions of the neo-liberal crisis – a “crisis of representation”

The current capitalist crisis began as a financial crisis in the US in 2007/8. It has now assumed both a global and a multi-faceted character, marked in particular by sluggish economic growth through most of the developed capitalist world. One of the latest manifestations of this multi-faceted crisis is in the political domain, bringing uncertainty and disruption to a prevailing liberal electoral politics. The mainstream global media are describing it as a “crisis of representation”.

The neo-liberal state and party political space was constructed in response to capitalism’s last major crisis in the mid-1970s. It was piloted by Thatcher and Reagan and sought to roll-back the Keynesian, welfare state that had flourished in much of the developed capitalist world after 1945. It was characterised by a managerial, technicist political elite, zealously implementing what came to be known as the Washington consensus. It was consolidated by both centre-right and subsequently centre-left “Third Way” politicians like Blair, Schroeder and Bill Clinton (whose “Third Way” politics Thabo Mbeki admired and sought to emulate here in SA).

A popular and often successful electoral rejection of this politics occurred through the 2000s, sweeping notably through many countries in Latin America. The 2007 Polokwane events and the 2009 incoming ANC-administration, with its own internal dynamics and contradictions, can be understood as part, if an uneven part, of the electoral wave of rejection of neo-liberal politics in many countries of the global South.

Now in the advanced capitalist world itself, we are witnessing a major electoral backlash against the neo-liberal Washington consensus. Part of this backlash has been led by left-leaning political projects (Bernie Sanders who would have likely out-performed Hillary Clinton against Trump; Jeremy Corbyn who has had to engineer a grass-roots rebellion against his own Labour Party parliamentary caucus; Syriza in Greece; Podemos in Spain; Die Linke in Germany; etc.).

The rise of right-wing populism in Europe and the US

However, for the moment through much of Europe and in the US, it is “anti-establishment” right-wing populists who have succeeded most significantly in mobilising popular discontent. This popular discontent is grounded in the increasing precariousness of employment, high levels of household debt, and deepening social inequality for large swathes of the working class and middle strata. The immediate economic policy target of these right-wing populist movements is neo-liberal “free trade” policies being pursued in the context of the “disruptive” introduction of digitised technologies (the so-called fourth industrial revolution) and “winner takes all” markets. These right-wing populist movements also mobilise on the basis of racist anti-immigrant and anti-minorities sentiment.

In the developed world the main social base for this right-wing populism are vulnerable “middle class” strata (including sections of the industrial working class). Study after study has shown that in contrast to the several decades prior, inter-generational “downward social” mobility has become the norm as established white and blue collar jobs are displaced by a combination of the introduction of new digitised technologies and moving of production processes to lower waged economies in the third world. Right wing in form and substance, the predominant form of political populism in the developed world rejects globalisation, regionalism and free trade, as well as demonstrating hostility towards established politics and “the establishment”, while also being deeply racist and xenophobic. The rise of Donald Trump and Brexit can both be recognised as having this hall mark, with the potential election of National Front leader, Marine Le Pen, as President of France being the next major test. Should Le Pen be elected (and this is now no longer unthinkable) and should she follow through with her pledge to take France out of the European Union, that would probably be “game over” for the EU.

Two variants of populism South Africa

The global crisis of neo-liberalism is spawning other forms of populism in the **developing world**. In South Africa this crisis is super-imposed upon and further aggravates persisting crisis levels of racialised poverty, inequality and unemployment. The 1996 class project led by President/Deputy President Mbeki was essentially an attempt to stabilise a post-apartheid South Africa on the basis of neo-liberal macro-economic policies (including trade liberalisation, globalisation, and privatisation) that would, supposedly, produce sustained growth.

The leading social force in this project was to be a new, ANC political-managerialist stratum closely linked to a rising BEE generation of “patriotic capitalists”. Sustained capitalist growth, it was reasoned, would enable significant redistributive measures to be “delivered” by the managerialist elite to a broader populace and a welcoming electorate – thus enabling the electoral reproduction of the ANC-aligned political stratum in government.

This whole strategy has largely imploded economically, socially, ideologically and politically. The inherent weaknesses of a neo-liberal strategic agenda for South Africa have now been compounded by the global neo-liberal capitalist crisis.

While we cannot simplistically read our South African reality off a global time-line, it is not entirely accidental that the Polokwane events, the 2008 recall of Mbeki, and the 2009 election of the first Zuma-led administration, all occur at the moment that the current global crisis of neo-liberalism begins to unfold.

Between 1994 and c.2007 there were “winners” and relative “losers”.

The key beneficiaries of the first post-apartheid decade included:

- Established monopoly capital which was able to return to relative profitability, thanks to GEAR-related trade and financial liberalisation, de-conglomeration, mergers and acquisitions and disinvestment.
- A first wave of BEE beneficiaries, accommodated within the ranks of established monopoly capital through the “social contract” between the new political elite and established monopoly capital
- A new political/public sector managerial stratum closely linked to the ANC-led Alliance. This stratum also included a trade union leadership whose career trajectory tended to carry them into the political/public sector managerial stratum, or into business.

- Professionals and middle strata from “minorities” – despite gripes about affirmative action measures, generally professionals and middle strata from “minorities” that had enjoyed relative educational and training possibilities prior to 1994 (whites, obviously, but also much of the Indian community, and a professional and artisanal stratum in the Coloured community). These social strata either sustained their relatively privileged positions (in the case of white middle strata), or enjoyed new possibilities and advancements. These strata have increasingly been mobilised into liberal centrist politics, notably through the DA.

Despite massive formal sector retrenchments (particularly in mining and agriculture), generally most South Africans saw some improvement in their lives post-1994, largely due to major redistributive efforts (social grants, RDP housing, water and electricity connections, the significant expansion and formal de-racialisation of higher education and training). However, in the absence of radical progressive, structural transformation, particularly of the productive economy, and in the absence of a radical land reform programme, these re-distributive efforts:

- Are often overwhelmed by the size of the social needs, and are fiscally impossible to expand indefinitely;
- Which, in turn, has provoked a deep sense of frustrated expectation with the resulting disillusion, social alienation, fragmented communities and anger, not least among a post-apartheid black youth generation.

The failure to drive inclusive, employment-creating growth has resulted in a mass of the relatively excluded – the rural poor, particularly women; informal sectors; low-skilled workers (rock-drill operators, for instance); unemployed youth; black lower middle-strata whose suburban ambitions are precariously maintained through high-levels of house-hold debt; the “missing middle”, etc.

This is the terrain on which all manner of regressive social phenomena have sprouted – violence against women and children; xenophobia; the spread of “happy-clappy” evangelism (at the expense of the more established churches and the more secularist traditions of, for instance, the SABC in the early post-apartheid period) – including all manner of quackery and fake “prophets-of-doom”; the resurgence of “identity” politics including, in rural areas, a resurgence of ethnic traditionalism, and even renewed life being breathed into narrow Africanist and BC discourses; the use of “muti” by AMCU-inspired strikers, etc.

These are all signs of social distress, and they have destabilised the post-1994 political settlement, introducing deepening factional volatility within the ANC-led alliance, as well as breakaways from Cosatu and the ANC, and diminishing ANC electoral support – our own “crisis of representation”.

It is into this terrain that we have seen, also, the emergence of demagogic populist political projects:

- Some more “left” in form, and best exemplified by the EFF (although it is not alone); and
- The other essentially “conservative” and “traditionalist” in character (exemplified by the Gupta-captured network – the “premier league” (two of whose premiers cut their political teeth in Bantustan parties), the ANC YL and WL, the so-called MKVL, etc.)

Of course, “left” and “conservative” in this context are provisional terms. Both versions exhibit many of the same characteristics (cults of personality; pseudo “fancy-dress” militarism exemplified by “commander-in-chief” Malema on the one hand, and the MKVA “PEP-store camouflage” leadership on the other). Both versions flirt with an anti-white Africanism; both show little regard for the rule of law

and the democratic Constitution; and both adopt anti-imperialist and anti so-called “white monopoly capital” rhetoric. Both fish in the revivalist waters of a conservative Christian evangelism and both flirt with traditional leadership.

These similarities are not unrelated to the fact that much of the leadership of both currents emerged largely from the same political roots in what the SACP characterised as a post-Polokwane ANC “New Tendency” associated with aggrieved second generation aspirant BEE business-people and politicians side-lined during the Mbeki era.

There are differences between them however. EFF-style populism has as its core social base alienated African youth in cities and small towns to whom a more left-styled rhetoric appeals. The core base of the parasitic populist tendency tends to be more rural, more conservative, slightly older, often social grant beneficiaries and others in clientelistic dependency relations with politicians and political slates. While both populist tendencies preach a gospel of “instant personal gratification”:

- The left tendency calls for this on behalf of popular strata (“land invasion”, a R12,5000 monthly national minimum wage for all workers, “free higher education NOW” for all students, etc.);
- The conservative tendency takes immediate, smash-and-grab personal gratification for **themselves** as a natural right (Nkandla, Gupta mining rights, Hlaudi’s bonuses) while preaching a gospel of patience and dependence to their “flock”. Church leaders are advised to “pray for us” rather than being involved in politics.

These differences then underpin a symbiotic relationship between the two populist currents, with the excesses of the one demagogically justifying the excesses of the other. Nkandla is used demagogically to argue for #Fees Must Fall Now. The brashness of the EFF is used to invoke a conservative back-lash, a “respect for authority”, and the abuse of the state’s security and intelligence forces.

Populism left and right – the battle of ideas and the role of the SACP

A critical vanguard role for the SACP in the present is to expose the ideological and programmatic demagoguery of both populist currents. In particular, the Gupta-captured, “conservative” populism is engaged in an active fight-back ideological campaign within the ANC-led alliance and the Party. We need to systematically expose the hypocrisy of their arguments:

- When we attack Gupterialisation their counter-argument is “what about the Ruperts and Oppenheimers?” – as if Gupterialisation of SARS, Eskom, Transnet strengthens the capacity of the state to deal with established monopoly capital;
- They claim to be “anti-imperialist” – as if illegal money laundering and expatriation of surplus to Dubai and other tax havens strikes a blow for national sovereignty;
- They say they are the victims of an imperialist “regime change agenda” directed from London, but their propaganda offensive, involving fly-by-night NGOs like Mngxitima’s “Black First Land First” and Mzwanele Jimmy Manyi’s “Decolonisation Foundation”, is run by the notorious, right-wing, UK-based, Bell Pottinger image consultancy;
- They claim that the imperialist “regime change agenda” is grounded in South Africa’s active participation in Brics. It is true that imperialist circles will not be happy with SA’s alignment with a Brics agenda, and it is also true that Brics provides a useful, potential counter-weight to an otherwise US-dominated unipolar world system. However, the progressive nature of Brics should

also not be exaggerated. In the recent period in both Brazil and India, right-wing governments have taken power. Russia under Putin is not the Soviet Union and China has its own national priorities.

Populism and a liberal constitutional counter mobilisation

Both the “left” and “conservative” populist currents are increasingly reckless and, if left unchecked, are likely to result in a failed state scenario unfolding in South Africa. This is increasingly recognised by a wide array of South Africans. Over the past 12 months, since the removal of cde Nene as Minister of Finance in December 2015, and with almost daily new revelations of parasitic misbehaviour and with growing evidence of a parallel state operating outside of cabinet discipline and outside parliamentary answerability, a broad wave of social mobilisation has gathered momentum, spanning mainstream churches, company CEOs, first generation BEE beneficiaries, and ANC stalwarts and genuine MK veterans, rallying around groupings like “Save South Africa”. The mobilisation is directed against certain venal forms of corporate capture (the Guptas) and many but not all of these forces are calling for President Zuma to step down.

The SACP has had a presence within some of this mobilisation and there has been explicit or tacit support from within parts of the ANC and from Cosatu. It is important that we continue to do so, to avoid a complete hegemony over this mobilisation by liberal or 1996 class project tendencies – without becoming factionalist ourselves.

The broadness of this mobilisation is a strength but also a weakness. The critique of the present reality tends to be largely moral, and framed within a liberal constitutionalism. It is often directed simply at personalities (important as that might be) without offering a clear analysis of how the ANC and the country descended into the current challenges, and without therefore providing a clear, radical transformational agenda.

This is the complex terrain on which the SACP has a critical role to play in refusing both populism and a return to neo-liberal “rule of law” constitutionality.

Energy

There are really very big issues in this space, and the SACP has been absent. This area is crucial in the transformation of our economy, apart from some of the mega projects that are planned. Yet we have a relative advantage to start engaging with all the issues here given the fact that the Portfolio Committee is chaired by a member of this CC, and another CC member was a minister in this portfolio, albeit briefly.

One of the most critical issues to be engaged relate to the whole issue of the energy mix of our country and the role and place of each of the components of this mix. For example, we have never debated the issue of nuclear energy as the SACP nor have we, for instance, see the future of coal and the huge reserves that South Africa has. There are also big debates on renewables, and generally the issue of energy is at the centre of the transformation of our economy and driving a second more radical phase of our revolution!

Water

South Africa is a water-scarce country, and this resources is vital for our livelihoods as well as a critical input into the economy. The sector is faced with huge challenges, including the threat of mining acid to our water resources. The SACP for instance may want to consider starting a campaign against mine water drainage and for the bosses to pay for this destruction.

Water also has very big projects in the pipeline, primarily the building of dams and these are a target of tenderpreneurs. We need organisation and mobilisation to ensure that these funds are not wasted or siphoned off. As the SACP we have also not participated in comprehensive campaigning around how to save water. There is talk also of considering desalination of sea water as part of mitigating the possibility of run out of clean drinking water.

The criminal justice system

Twenty-two years into our democracy, there are still huge challenges facing our criminal justice system. It is also a system whose parts have been abused at various times since our 1994 democratic breakthrough. The SACP has also been on the receiving end of some of the abuse by some in these institutions. There are also disturbing signs of securocratic tendencies, with the increasing use of intelligence agencies to do dirty political work. The recent reports around the funding of a trade union to counter AMCU in the platinum belt, as well allegations that intelligence agents were used to monitor some staff members at the SABC.

The current state of many of our institutions in the Criminal Justice System is in a highly unsatisfactory state and their behaviour leave a lot to be desired, whether it be the Hawks, Ipid, parts of the police and in the National Prosecuting Authority, and its disastrous handling of the Minister of Finance. In short, we need to develop significant capacity to interact with this system, and we ignore it at our own peril. These institutions are also a prime target for being corrupted by the parasitic bourgeoisie as part of covering its tracks.

Building the capacity of the SACP – ‘socialism is the future, build it now’

In order to realise the key strategic objectives outlined above, we have to admit that as of now we do not have the necessary strategic capacity. The second more radical phase of our revolution cannot be realised unless it is underpinned by a strong SACP pursuing the objectives of its programmatic slogan ‘Socialism is the Future, Build it Now’. Radical economic transformation needs, from our standpoint, to be driven by the struggle to build elements of, momentum towards, and capacity for socialism. The driving of a second phase is in itself a terrain towards the realisation of some of the goals of our programmatic slogan.

Driving a second more radical phase will also require that we confront the stubborn and persisting realities of colonialism of a special type. It is therefore important that we place colonialism of a special type at the Centre of our key strategic thinking and objectives over the next ten years.

A key strategic and programmatic task that still remains a crucial missing link is how to properly integrate gender and a gendered approach into the key strategic tasks and programme of the SACP. Part of dealing with this is that patriarchy and patriarchal practices and attitudes are a reality in our movement, including inside our own Party structures. Part of building strategic capacity of the SACP must including a conscious struggle to greatly enhance women participation in the Party at all levels and creative struggles and conceptualisation of non-sexism inside the ranks of our Party, our movement and the revolutions as a whole.

Having identified the key strategic challenges and tasks above, it is going to be important for the SACP between now and the first CC next year to convene discussions on building the strategic and organisational capacity of the SACP over the next ten years. This must aim at realising our strategic objectives. The Party Building Commission must produce a discussion document by the next Central Committee for discussion and approval as a discussion document towards the Congress. Over the

years we have had many discussions over how to strengthen the SACP. What needs to be done now is not vastly different from discussions we have had before.

The SACP needs to strengthen itself organisationally at all levels. For instance, our head office needs to be professionalised, improve its work ethic and manage performance much more tightly. Our head office must be able to drive and co-ordinate national programmes and campaigns as well as effectively manage deployment of CC cadres to Party activities across the country. The provincial offices need to be strengthened along the same lines as national office and ensure organisational presence of the SACP in all parts of our provinces.

However the mainstay of building the strategic and organisational capacity of the SACP must be strong district structures. We must have wall to wall district organisation and structures which must lead the building and servicing strong branch structures, drive local campaigns and ensure that the SACP is independently rooted amongst the people. All of our districts must have dedicated and resourced district organisers and offices. Political education and cadre development must be intensified at all levels but with particular attention being paid to the development of a solid commissariat at district level. The mainstay of Party organisation must be the district.

Over the next decade elaborate attention and resources must be paid to strengthening party branches and units where appropriate. The primary intention of making districts the mainstay of Party organisation is so that we can have structures supporting the building of strong Party branches and units. Our weakness continues to be the fact that overwhelmingly our branches are community based and we hardly have any workplace Party structures. We need to create these. In addition we must build Party branches in all of our university campuses and TVET colleges. These institutions, especially the universities are very important in the broader struggles of the battle of ideas.

Our head office and all our sub-national structures must also be strengthened to do sectoral organisation in order to ensure Party influence in a number of sectors. For example the SACP needs to build relations and its presence in the arts and sports, as well as create local reading, writing and performance clubs and initiatives. There is a glaring lack but space for left wing ideas and creativity in these spheres.

Lastly, but perhaps most importantly the next six months in the lead up to our Congress, we must use our discussion documents to make the Party and its socialist ideas felt throughout the country. We need to create a buzz and ideological impact as we move towards our Congress. We need to publicly release most if not all of our discussion documents immediately after our February 2017 Central Committee. By end of April we need to convene a broader Imbizo of working class and community organisations to share some of our key documents and listen to the views of a variety of class forces on the Communist Party and its policies and thinking, as well as collectively discuss the challenges facing our revolution and how to confront them. We must use such a gathering as the launch of initiatives to start building a working class led popular movement.

As we move towards our 14th Congress our approach should be that our Party programme, the South African Road to Socialism still remains valid, but needs to be updated incorporating the strategic tasks of the SACP over the next 10 years.



The Inseparable Connection:

The woman question, class struggle and the NDR

Lenin guided Marxist-Leninist Parties on the issue of patriarchy and the emancipation of women as follows:

"The thesis must clearly point out that real freedom for women is possible only through communism. The inseparable connection between the social and human position of the woman, and private property in the means of production, must be strongly brought out. That will draw a clear and ineradicable line of distinction between our policy and feminism. And it will also supply the basis for regarding the woman question as a part of the social question, of the workers' problem, and so bind it firmly to the proletarian class struggle and the revolution. The communist women's movement must itself be a mass movement, a part of the general mass movement. Not only of the proletariat, but of all the exploited and oppressed, all the victims of capitalism or any other mastery. In that lies its significance for the class struggles of the proletariat and for its historical creation communist society. We can rightly be proud of the fact that in the Party, in the Communist International, we have the flower of revolutionary woman kind. But that is not enough. We must win over to our side the millions of working women in the towns and villages. Win them for our struggles and in particular for the communist transformation of society. There can be no real mass movement without women.

"Our ideological conceptions give rise to principles of organisation. No special organisations for women. A woman communist is a member of the Party just as a man communist, with equal rights and duties. There can be no difference of opinion on that score. Nevertheless, we must not close our eyes to the fact that the Party must have bodies, working groups, commissions, committees, bureaus or whatever you like, whose particular duty it is to arouse the masses of women workers, to bring them into contact with the Party, and to keep them under its influence. That, of course, involves systematic work among them. We must train those whom we arouse and win, and equip them for the proletarian class struggle under the leadership of the Communist Party. I am thinking not only of proletarian women, whether they work in the factory or at home. The poor peasant women, the petty bourgeois – they, too, are the prey of capitalism, and more so than ever since the war. The unpolitical, unsocial, backward psychology of these women, their isolated sphere of activity, the entire manner of their life – these are facts. It would be absurd to overlook them, absolutely absurd. We need appropriate bodies to carry on work amongst them, special methods of agitation and forms of organisation. That is not feminism, that is practical, revolutionary expediency." Quoted by Zetkin in Lenin on the Woman Question

Every SACP Member must be fully conscious of and sensitive to the lived experience of working class women. While working class women are more likely to stand with their menfolk than identify with women from the ruling class, and more so when they have also experienced national oppression at the hands of the ruling class, as is correctly expressed in the 1954 Women's Charter, the lived experience of working class women and working class men are not identical. This is caused by many factors – some rooted in patriarchy, some rooted in the capitalist mode of reproduction, some rooted in biology.

Many leaders have expressed themselves on how best the freedom of society can be measured – by state of its prisons, by the condition of its children, and by the position of its women. Who are

poorest of poor that we so often talk about? Certainly working class women must be amongst those, and as Madiba has said, rural working class women. Daily experiences of working class women are indeed a measure of how far society has gone in achieving society based on equality, economic and social empowerment, prosperity, social justice, non-exploitation. What is necessary in society for emancipation and socio-economic empowerment of women to be realised? What conditions are necessary for achieving a society based on equality, economic and social empowerment, prosperity, social justice, non-exploitation for these black working class women?

Developing a Marxist approach to the struggle against patriarchy in South Africa

The paper entitled "Developing a Marxist approach to the struggle against patriarchy in SA" written in 2007 is still as valid today as it was then, albeit that the conjuncture has evolved. Jeremy Cronin, the SACP Deputy GS recognised:

"A blind spot – Many of the SACP's strategic position papers have been justly criticised for either largely ignoring the related questions of patriarchal and gender-based oppression, or for treating these topics as an "add-on". It is true that we generally remember to refer to class, national and gender oppression, but – while the SACP has devoted a great deal of analytic and practical attention to the intersection of class and national oppression – we have not really anchored our approach to gender-based oppression firmly within our theory and practice."

He goes on to outline how the 10th Congress (July 1998) programme, Build people's power – build socialism now! began to sketch out one line of approach for a Marxist engagement with gender oppression, largely done by way of a self-criticism. He records that

"The 1998 programme makes the following main points:

- 1.1 Marxism developed on the foundations (and as a critique) of classical bourgeois economics. In its 18th and 19th century hey-day bourgeois economics still focused on **production** and therefore **labour**. This focus was central to Marxism as well. The focus was not wrong, but it led to a tendency to down-play the critical **reproductive** side of economies and societies. This led to a neglect of the fact that capitalist profit maximization is based not just on exploitative production relations, but critically on oppressive reproductive power relations.
- 1.2 The tendency to ignore this area was reinforced by the **social composition** of communist and socialist parties, emerging largely **from blue-collar, male-dominated, labour movements**.
- 1.3 The focus on production in Marxism and the movements it inspired tended to **obscure the central economic and social role played by "non-economic" activity in the reproduction of society** – the rearing of children, caring for the sick and elderly, and house-hold management, including basic chores like cleaning, cooking and shopping, for instance. Much of this work is borne by women, and the failure to adequately account for it has led to an historical blindness around gender oppression.
- 1.4 Insofar as **programmatic solutions** were offered for overcoming gender oppression in many socialist and communist formations, they tended themselves to be **"productivist solutions"** – by drawing women into productive, waged-labour they would be liberated, it was assumed, from the prison of their homes. In practice, while women have been partially liberated by being wage-earners in their own right, they have also typically had to carry a double burden – formal waged labour during "working hours", and informal, unpaid reproductive labour before and after that.
- 1.5 The 1998 SACP programme concludes: "The SACP believes that a key task in taking forward, developing and renewing the socialist project requires a much greater theoretical and practical

attention to reproductive labour, and it is here that much of the intersection between class and gender oppression is to be found." These perspectives marked progress for the SACP. But the 1998 programme still left much to be done." (Cronin, J. 2007)

Cronin critiqued the 1998 programme in that "it fails to locate the discussion of gender oppression within the specific South African reality. The 1998 programme refers generally to Marxism, and generally to gender oppression based on unpaid reproductive labour in capitalist societies. But what are the specific challenges we face in SA? Why, for instance, do we have such a huge crisis of violence against women and children? Do South African communists have anything to contribute to an understanding (and therefore also practical resolution) of this and other serious challenges in our society?" He then moves to analyse the central role of patriarchal oppression within Colonialism of a Special Type (CST).

Cronin also reflected on the persisting CST capitalist accumulation path and patriarchy in post-apartheid South Africa:

- "6.1 The apartheid CST state-form has been abolished, but a CST-type capitalist accumulation path continues to characterise much of our social and economic reality. One of its major manifestations is the persistence, and active reproduction of economic "duality" – the so-called "first" and "second economies".
 - 6.2 We have noted above that this so-called "second economy" is essentially located in a myriad of working class urban, peri-urban and rural townships. We have also noted that its principal function **from a capitalist perspective** lies in the cheap (for the dominant capitalist mode) **reproduction of labour power**.
 - 6.3 However, more than ever, much of this "second economy" and the communities and households associated with it are under immense strain. Factors placing strain include extremely high levels of unemployment (a 40% national average, but more than 70 and 80% in some localities), underemployment, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, house-hold indebtedness, and the continuing collapse of rural economies.
 - 6.4 These factors, taken together with others, including:
 - growing (if uneven) feminisation of the labour force in the "main-stream" economy
 - male retrenchments and high levels of male unemployment;
 - increasing mobility, including significant levels of rural to urban migration of young single and well-educated African women (many presumably in lower middle class, professional and service sector work);
 - large numbers of female-headed (and now even increasing numbers of child-headed) households;
 - stark generational divides, including cultural divides and the increasing commodification of much youth culture;
 - and the re-structuring of African households – some transforming into nuclear family structures, others retaining extended forms including the still pervasive "two households" reality – one urban, one rural;
 - and a massive and burgeoning housing backlog
- have also put strain on "traditional" patriarchal power relations within African working class households and communities.

6.5 While these challenges to “traditional” patriarchal power **CAN** have emancipatory consequences, in the pressure-cooker of acute under-development they are also producing many serious dysfunctional outcomes, including, what we might call **“lumpen-patriarchy”**. We mean by this various perverse attempts to re-affirm male power and retrograde versions of male identity in the face of crisis and male insecurity, including:

- extraordinarily high-levels of rape and sexual assault against women, not excluding the very old and the very young;
- other forms of anti-women and anti-child violence and abuse, including high levels of domestic violence; and
- various retrograde assertions of “male rights” and the evocation of “tradition” to justify the patriarchal abuse of positions of political and/or managerial authority.

6.6 There are also other versions of this “lumpen-patriarchy”, including the **war-lordism** that is endemic in much of the taxi industry; **shack-lordism** in many informal settlements; reactionary **vigilantism** in some parts of the country; male youth **gangsterism** sometimes with links into the **prison system**. While none of these is simply reducible to perverted forms of patriarchy, they are all strongly marked by patriarchal power relations and assumptions.

6.7 Still another version of lumpen-patriarchy, with links to all of the above, is the phenomenon of **“big man” “messiah” politics** - the politician as patriarchal “protector” and “bestower” of general “favours” upon loyal favourites. Latter day apartheid, and especially but not only Bantustan and tri-cameral, politics was rife with this kind of reality. But our new democracy, and our own movement, are not immune. The Truman Prince phenomenon is one extreme example of this phenomenon - which is possibly quite widespread, if in often more benign forms.

6.8 The central point that we have tried to establish in this section is that the many **deeply perverse realities** we are witnessing in our post-apartheid situation **are intimately linked into the persisting realities of a CST-based capitalist accumulation path, the duality it reproduces, and the insupportable pressures that are now placed on the “second economy”**.

6.9 To say this is not, of course, to excuse lumpen-patriarchal criminality for one minute – but it does help us to avoid a number of predictable tendencies:

- **self-denigration** (a typical danger among individuals or in societies that have suffered racial and/or patriarchal humiliation) - “there must be something wrong with me, or with us.”, or,
- the flip-side of the same coin: **denialism** – everything is “on track”, any claim to the contrary is racist propaganda, “they think we are genetically inferior savages”.

(Which is not to deny, in turn, that there are, of course, also rabidly racist views and “explanations” for the problems we are encountering. These must be dismissed with the contempt they deserve.) “ (Cronin, 2007)

In the final section of the paper, as all Communists should ask, Cronin reflects on **What is to be done?**

“8.1 In the first place, at a **conceptual level we need to move beyond the perspective of REPRODUCTIVE LABOUR** in approaching the interconnected questions of patriarchy and the “second economy” in South Africa. High-lighting the question of reproductive labour in our 1988 10th Congress helped the SACP to begin collectively to examine this historic “blind spot”, and to link the question of patriarchal oppression to a Marxist critique of capitalism.

8.2 The historic burden placed on African women in the labour reserves in 20th century, like the

burden currently carried by the so-called “second economy”, can indeed be understood as social **reproduction from the perspective of the mainstream dominant capitalist mode**. But this way of conceptualizing these realities places us within the parameters of capitalism.

8.3 Considered from the **perspective of the working class**, however, the historic role of production in the reserves, or socio-economic activity in the “second economy” is essentially **PRODUCTIVE LABOUR** – it produces **socially necessary “use values”** for the working class.

8.4 This kind of reconceptualisation is not simply a theoretical exercise. It reminds us that **the struggle for socialism is a struggle to make production for social need hegemonic over production for private profit**. This is, precisely, a central component of our MTV vision of making working class power hegemonic in every site of power.

8.5 In practice this means several things:

- It means that we must take up the struggle to **mainstream** socially necessary work in the **public sector** (much of it historically involving a majority of women)– here we are referring to many things, including areas of work that the “1996 class project” actively denigrated as **“unproductive” – health-workers, teachers, social workers, librarians, community policing**. There is now a belated rectification programme under-way to address the disastrous back-log, depletion and demoralization that has occurred in these sectors. From a socialist perspective we need to move beyond temporary measures to understand the centrality of mainstreaming these areas of **productive work**.
- It means approaching the entire so-called “second economy” in a completely different way. **Land reform and restitution** that simply lift households and communities into a ruthless, monopoly dominated market will deepen poverty and underdevelopment, not transform it. The same applies to endless **SMME** promotion endeavours. Re-capitalising the minibus industry without transforming public transport, will simply increase stratification in the sector to the detriment of the majority of small-owners, drivers and other workers, while deepening the subordination of the sector to the banks and multi-national minibus manufacturers and their local dealerships. **Critical to the transformation of the “second economy” is local democracy, municipal power working hand-in-hand with mobilised communities**. To transform the minibus sector, municipalities must re-claim public space – roads, parking, ranks – and regulate on a continuous daily basis public transport operations.
- Breaking with a capitalist logic also helps us to understand the potentially **transformative** nature of the struggle to build **sustainable communities** and **sustainable households**. Sustainability can be built through all of the above, through an effective and **comprehensive social security system**, through well-supported and networked **cooperatives**, and many other initiatives. The strategic objective of building sustainable communities and households is to break the dependence of working class communities on the **dominant capitalist mode** – for consumer goods, for wages, for services. Clearly, a complete de-linking from the dominant capitalist system is unlikely in any short-term scenario – however, degrees of relative de-linking help to build progressive working class power and hegemony within households and communities.

It is precisely this kind of programmatic strategic approach – guided by our critique of patriarchy – that will help to roll-back patriarchal oppression, particularly as it impacts on working class communities and households.” (Cronin,J 2007)

2017 – what is to be done?

A decade later in the year of the 100th anniversary of the Great October Revolution and in the context of our 14th SACP Congress, we need to use this analytical approach to engage with the 2017

conjuncture – one of a factionalised and demobilised ANC which has become more of an electoral party than a liberation movement; a weakened labour movement albeit led by COSATU and affiliate leadership focused on strengthening the industrial unions; a context of rampant state and private sector corruption; one of slow economic growth combined with an investment strike by capital; a situation of extensive unemployment with its concurrent impact on competition over resources within the working class, both within South African communities, and between South African and working class communities from other nations; a resurgence of conservatism in traditional cultures and religious leadership. (See Political Report to the 16th Plenary of the Central Committee of the 13th Congress)

The history of society is a history of class relations and of class struggle. Within the rope of the capitalist economic system, we find the strands of twine of racial oppression, cultural superiority, and patriarchy, not as parallel systems that operate as silos, but intertwined, reinforcing systems that shape each other, and ultimately form the strength of exploitative and oppressive economic system, that rope around the necks of working class men and women. A socialist future built on class struggle that does not include struggle against all forms of oppression, not as stages of struggle, but as integrated in struggle, will likely result in a distorted future unlikely to effectively emancipate working class women, men and children, and unlikely to effectively eclipse the racial oppression experience by the majority of working class people in South Africa.

Exercising democratic rights for advance of working class women

The political freedom we have won in 1994 and the democracy that we have built in South Africa has had significant impact on the political voice of women, and the role that women can play in the leadership of democratic institutions. It is significant that South Africa ranks 2nd in Africa and 5th in world in representation of women in Parliament (StatsSA, 2014), but even the history of the franchise in South Africa has been entwined with CST. Women's franchise history in SA started with the racially excluding Women's Enfranchisement Act, 1930 which extended the vote to white women on same basis as white men. The Tri-Cameral and Bantustan governments granted discriminatory voting rights in lesser houses. It was only in 1994 that the full and equal franchise to all South African adult citizens was won. In 2009, the gender split of participation of voters in the election was 56.89% women voters and 43.11% men voters, while in 2014 the registration of women and men voters indicated a 55%-45% breakdown. (IEC Reports) Women voting trends in local government elections need to be analysed and understood so that they can inform local service delivery planning.

Not only has democracy given women the right to vote, it has also through the Constitutional provisions and largely through the policy position adopted by the governing Party, increased the women representation in Parliament from 8 women MPs (2.7%) in the apartheid Parliament, to 27,74% in the first democratic Parliament, increasing to 43% in 2009 and dropping as the ANC majority dropped to 41.92% in 2014, not to mention the very significant change from white women representatives to a non-racial women's MPs. The NCOP in 2015 had 54 permanent delegates, of which 19 are women, constituting 35.19% of delegates, again dependent on the ANC contributing 54.5% women to lift the average number of women in the NCOP. South Africa has not legislated on proportion of MPs, and MPLs who must be women but in Local Government the Municipal Systems Act requires 50% of Councillors to be women. In the 2000 local government elections, women comprised only 19% of total councillors, with women comprising 28% of councillors elected on PR lists, but only 11% of ward councillors. In 2015, 106 (38%) of the 207 municipalities had women as mayors; 39% Councillors were women; 34% of municipal managers were women and 26% of directors in local government were women. (StatsSA. Non-financial census of municipalities 2015)

While the presence of women in legislatures is significant, it does not automatically lead to women's issues being prioritised and certainly not to those of black working class women. Parliament, Provincial

legislatures, Metro, District and Municipal Councils make laws and by-laws, which must be consistent with the Constitution and so must prevent discrimination and must promote women's empowerment, and indeed Parliament has in 20 years passed much equality based legislation. However, while much non-discriminatory and equality law has been passed, the manner of implementation has not resulted in the expected impact on the lives of working class women.

As Lenin said:

"Where there are landlords, capitalists and merchants, there can be no equality between women and men in law. Where there are no landlords, capitalist and merchants, where government of toilers is building new life without these exploiters, **there equality between men and women exists in law. But that is not enough. It is far cry from equality in law to equality in life. We want women workers to achieve equality with men workers not only in law, but in life as well. For this, it is essential that women workers take ever increasing part in administration of public enterprises and in administration of state." (Lenin, 1920 To Working Women)**

Moving from this premise that equality in law and rights does not automatically translate into lived equality in access to jobs, resources, and protection, implementation of legislation must be focused on as a site of struggle to translate these rights into lived experience. South African law protects women in the community, in the work place, in the home, and in the state, in particular through the following categories of legislation:

- Legislation relating to the promotion, protection and enforcement of human rights
- Legislation supporting equality in the economy and the workplace
- Legislation providing support to Chapter-9 institutions
- Legislation pertaining to the social and physical protection
- International Instruments on women's empowerment and gender equality signed and ratified by South Africa

What then is the role of SACP legislators and councillors (men and women) to oversee and correct the manner in which such legislation is drafted and implemented? Our work as the Party is to ensure that the legislative protection is felt by black working class women in particular. What is the role of Party women members who are located in leadership roles be they political role or managerial role? What is the role of Party men cadres who are located in leadership roles to ensure that they as Communists are vocal and practical on the issues of the woman question?

Development state's obligations towards black working class women

A developmental state provides a critical vehicle for transformation of gender relations in state and society. State policy and programmes must intervene to promote equality, empowerment and access for women, and particularly working class women in relation to work, education, economic opportunity, social security, safety, health, justice, land, housing, women friendly human settlements, finances, and all state services. However, to do this, the gender responsiveness of the developmental state must be entrenched. Despite gender equality frameworks both for the nation and in the public service, the manner in which such policies have been implemented undermines the transformative nature of state capacity on the socio-economic empowerment of women and promotion of gender equality. The SACP must continue to champion the placing of the interests of black working class women are the centre of **all** government policies and programmes.

Human rights are unpinned by socio-economic rights – if those are not secured all other rights are skewed by class inequalities. The anti-sexist, anti-discrimination and pro-equality South African Constitution is the bedrock of our democracy. The significance of this Constitution as the highest law in the land from which our justice system flows for women, and in particular black working class women, should not be under-estimated. Constitution is product of struggle on terrain of Constitutional Assembly at a particular point in our history. Interpretation of Constitution is not only defined in Constitutional Court. It is, and must, also defined in course of gender conscious mass campaigning and organising around the rights embodied in the Constitution and law.

The relationship between constitutional, traditional and religious law is a critical interface for black working class women, and particularly women in the rural areas. The interface between hereditary institutions, family, patriarchy and women's oppression is critical dimension and one that, too often, we shy away from engaging with in public. The SACP must articulate itself strongly on the transformation of those institutions in society that have the authority and power to sustain inequities and inequality. Noting the gains in moving away from the male hereditary approach to traditional leaders, the issues of harmful cultural practices that affect girl children and women, such as child marriages, non-recognition of a woman's right to divorce while a man can, women's right to inherit, lobola, ukuthwala and forced marriage, virginity testing all require a clear Party position.

Black working class women do not on the whole have the right form of support to access the courts to promote their protection. South Africa has made significant progress in improving working class access to courts through the Legal Aid Board that appoints lawyers to represent accused persons, but whether this has been accessed in the interests of working class women is subject to further analysis. Women's access to courts – civil courts, criminal courts, specialist courts such as Equality Court, Labour Courts, Land Claims Court, Special Income Tax Courts, Electoral Court, Maintenance Court, Children's Court and Traditional Courts needs to be a focus of struggle. The point has recently been made by CCMA staff that few women are using the access they have to CCMA to address discrimination against women in the workplace.

Impact of women's unique life cycle on social participation

Moving from the premise that gender relations are social determined, it must be recognised that underpinning all discussion on the Woman Question and on the emancipation of women, the unique life cycle of women must be fully recognised, and planned for.

Women's unique life cycle which includes for most women menstruation, pregnancy, giving birth and breastfeeding for each of their children, menopause. This interrupted life cycle of most women, whether in formal employment, informal economic activity, in education and skills development, or in social enterprise, which is markedly different from the life cycle of men. The question here that must be addressed in Party policy is how should a socialist society address this reality in a manner that empowers and does not discriminate against women.

This life cycle of women, and its unique set of needs, must be considered in relation to girl children at school, on the sports fields, in cultural and arts performance, at home; must be considered in relation to women in higher education and skills training, in informal work sectors, in formal employment and workplaces, in the community, in political leadership. This unique life cycle cannot be a basis for women to be dis-empowered anywhere in life, and unless it is made very visible and not taboo, the social service and systems required by women will not be addressed – and the most obvious case of this is the lack of access to high quality, healthy and affordable sanitary pads for all working class girls and women. To this end, the YCL leadership on this matter that in 2010 took the menstrual needs for girls and young women out of the closet and into the public domain is to be commended.

What should radical economic transformation mean for women workers?

Radical economic transformation informs state policy in the 2014 mandate period, and in the 2017 State of the Nation Address, has been defined in a narrow manner to focus on changes in ownership and control. For the Party, radical economic transformation is indeed the struggle for socialism and is integral to “Socialism is the future! Build it now!” From the perspective of the woman question, or from a gender transformation perspective, radical economic transformation must be approached as a multi-pronged approach to socio-economic transformation. As argued above, the strategy of including women in a capitalist or even mixed economy without changing the social economy, the mechanisms of the reproduction and care of the working class, and the culture and ideology that sustain the gender stereotypes and divisions of labour, will simply perpetuate the double burden of working class women, and the ideology of patriarchy.

Marxist economic thought for long time identified central problem of women’s oppression as the lack of integration of women into economy, and particularly into formal economy. It is neither simply lack of integration nor merely form of integration of women that is issue. Actual problem is that terms of economic participation for women and men are different. Principally, the form of men’s participation is premised on the relative exclusion of women, and on women’s role within home sphere. While it is argued that economic inclusion is critical for women’s freedom and that empowerment of women is an economic development imperative, it still remains that the economic development that women’s participation accelerates is in the owner class interests.

Looking at the labour market overview, in 2015, the female working age population in SA was 18,329 000. The SA labour force is male-dominated and in 2015 consisted of 11 520 000 (54,7%) men, as opposed to 9 514 000 women (43,3%). However, the labour participation rate of women increased from 48.8% in 2010 to 51.9% in 2015. Female employment grew faster than men, growing at 4.2 % per annum 2010-2015 (Stats SA 2015), but the employment of women is focused on particular sectors. 46% of men work in productive sectors plus transport and construction, compared to only 20% of women in these sectors. Most women are employed in non-agricultural employment (63.1 %); with 11.4% in private households as domestic workers; and 3.3% in agriculture. (Status of Women in the South African Economy Report, 2015)

Of those women in paid employment, particularly Black women tend to be vertically and horizontally concentrated in elementary and low paid employment. South African women earned less than men, on average, in 2001 and 2005. SA women’s incomes were on average 42% less than those of men, which compounds women’s need to provide for the necessities rather than to invest their money. (Status of Women in SA Economy Report 2015). In 2010, an African woman with a degree still earned less than a white man with only a matric. Women are also the majority of people employed on limited contracts.

The extensive involvement of women in the South Africa informal economy is significant and bears the seeds not only of growing informal enterprises to develop into fully-fledged formal business that can provide significant employment; but also as a sector that provides important services and products to formal economy and vice versa. The informal economy also has scope for social forms of entrepreneurship and the SACP should explore the scope that this creates for women playing critical role in establishment of social economy as alternative to capitalist labour market. Pat Horn in response to the above quoted African Communist article had argued that

“The challenge facing Marxist analysis today is to try to understand the class relations which exist within the informal economy – which consists of workers (both workers working for some sort of wage rate, however irregular, as well as own-account workers, including home-based

producers, street vendors, waste-collectors, etc.) and also entrepreneurs and employers (including labour-brokers and intermediaries).

"The question which faces us is how to identify the workers in the informal economy. It is not quite as straightforward as in the formal economy where workers are those who sell their labour power directly to the capitalists. However, in considering the range of employment and labour relationships which exist in the informal economy, it is possible to identify an element of economic dependence (albeit not necessarily dependence upon a party identified as an employer – particularly in the case of own-account workers) of certain informal economy operators on other actors, such as local authorities, suppliers, owners of property or assets used by them to perform their work, enforcement agents of public policies and laws, even protection racketeers (to enter into the terrain which has been identified as "lumpen-patriarchy" in the document) just to be able to carry out their livelihood activities.

"Having argued for the incorporation of workers in the informal economy as part of the changing global labour market and therefore an integral part of the wider working class, and for a clear analysis of the systematic undervaluation of both the productive and reproductive work most commonly performed by women to inform our understanding of gender oppression in the capitalist system, what does this mean for class struggles?

If we accept that informal economy workers are part of the working class, this means that our revolutionary task is to organise them in alliance with the traditionally organised working class. If we regard them merely as the marginalised poor or the lumpen-proletariat, then we treat them at best as "welfare cases" and victims of the capitalist neo-liberal world order, or at worst as potential enemies of the working class." (Horn, P. 2007)

Given the predominance of women in the informal economy, this perspective has particular significance and lays a basis for expanding the level of organisation of these working class women into the formations of the organised working class.

Unemployment, inequality and poverty affecting working class families in urban, peri-urban and rural areas, have particular impact on women in these families, more so given historical legacy of colonialism of special type on most working class families. Given role that women play in family as family manager, as person responsible for ensuring social reproduction of workers, impact of each member of family in relation to employment, income, access to land, access to social services. Of particular significance for Communists is to understand that social dysfunctionality originate not in weak moral fibre or lack of faith, but in the stress and distress that is generated through the manifestations of capitalist – the burden of unemployment, poverty and gross inequality. It is this social distress that results in domestic violence, incest, drinking, substance abuse, human trafficking and aggression, most often with women and girls as victims.

The links between poverty, indebtedness and gender are starkly seen in quantitative statistics. In 2012 almost 2 million fewer women than men had income-generating employment. The amount of women in South Africa who borrow for education or school fees is 51% higher than for men. 51% of women said they borrowed money to buy food in 2014. The average ratio of total debt to monthly income is also 40% higher for women than for men in South Africa. Only 21% of women claim to have enough money for savings after covering spending needs. 2% more women than men in South Africa borrowed money in 2014. More women (21%) than men (18%) borrow on store credit; More women (74%) than men (67%) borrow from friends or family. In 2008, the poverty headcount was 53.9% for women and 49.0% for men.

In the 3rd Quarter 2016 QLFS Report, the level of official unemployment for men was 34.2% and for women was 43.4%. The expanded unemployment rate (people available to work including those who have given up hope of finding one) in the same quarter was 43.0% for men and 55.0% for women. The South African employment rate in 2015 was 25%. Of these unemployed people, 68% were women. The narrow unemployment figure for women was 2,728 000 and the expanded unemployment figure for women was 4,066 000. There were 1,338 000 female discouraged work seekers in 2015. Young women (between ages of 15-35 years) constitute 56.6% of youth not in employment, education or training, compared with 43.4% for young men (Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2015).

Non-capitalist social solidarity economy ?

Pat Horn, in a recent article in African Communist, has shone light on alternative socialist practices in Nicaragua, where unlike in Brazil and Argentina where such practices are regarded as anomalies in the overall neo-liberal economy,

“what is known as the Social Solidarity economy is more than an anomaly in the economy – it has been institutionalised into a national system. A key actor in this process has been the trade union confederation of own-account (self-employed) workers CTCP (Confederacion de Trabajadores por Cuenta Propia)”

She has noted in this article that “ The FSLN learnt a lesson after losing elections in the 1970s – it had to become more intelligence in recognising what people want. This has led to own-account workers being taken into account. Notwithstanding the fact that Nicaragua is a socialist country, it has to survive with the reality of the global economy. Investors need stability, space to operate and certainty about the situation they invest in. The Nicaraguan government has been increasing social security by 8% per year. The State cannot provide major employment, but has to facilitate a favourable environment for people to be able to work. The Nicaraguan government has recognised the importance of family work in Nicaragua, and established a Ministry of Family Economy and Cooperation (in addition to the Ministry of Public Finances and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry). This Ministry was formed by consolidating two previous bodies (the IMPIME Institute of SMEs and the Minsitry of Rural Development) into one new Ministry.” (Horn, P 2017)

As argued by David Harvey in 17 Contradictions and The End of Capitalism, much of our Marxist analysis has drawn largely from the analysis of the production under capitalism in Volume 1 of Das Kapital, and less on the analysis of reproduction under capitalism, which is focused on in Volume 2 of Das Kapital. The result of this has been significant in corrupting/distorting the approach to the Woman Question and at times sliding into the epithet that “once women are included in the economy they will be free”, without realising that the additional responsibilities that women have in the reproductive sphere result in fact in women bearing a double burden of work in the productive sector and then a lion-share, and an undervalued and hidden of the work in the reproductive sector.

Where and how does social reproduction take place? In part through state support in the form of social grants, pensions funds, UIF, social wage etc. but fundamentally social reproduction takes place in the family, the basic socially constructed institution/unit of society. The role of women within family is social defined to often covers housework, cooking, laundry, cleaning, etc. Working class women have developed unique ways of addressing this workload, often when a woman has employment, relying on informal jobs by other women to ensure clean clothes, child care etc. The family unit is the economic premise that provides capital with cheap reproduction of labour. Put simply, capitalist profit depends on hidden domestic labour, performed predominantly by women and girl children. Unpaid work by women both in home, in the community and in agricultural work makes enormous contribution to economy which is seldom recognised.

The family as basic unit of society is portrayed by capitalist ideology as the bedrock of everything that is natural and good. For women, much as family is place of romance, love, motherhood and security, household is also site of oppression. Family experience also is defined by class, race, culturally and patriarchy. The family, household, domestic unit is usually understood as a hierarchy with man at top, with all resources pooled and common interests of family are expressed by male household head, and in the male lead extended family. The extent of female headed households in South Africa is very marked and has been so across time, and is phenomenon which is not being reversed in South Africa. The StatsSA General Household Survey indicates that the total number of households in South Africa is 16 122 000, of which 6 663 000 are female headed households (41.3%), the other 9 459 000 (58.7%) are male headed households. Capitalism and patriarchal oppression are premised on unpaid domestic labour, largely by women, at home. Our Constitution and our approach to gender empowerment have expectation that women should perform outside of home and should deliver in same way as men – terrain remains lopsided due to family responsibilities. Given the role that the family plays in social reproduction, we must put the household and family relations under the microscope in order to identify what must change. Issues of teenage pregnancy, ukuthwala, forced marriage, child marriage all require attention of the SACP.

The developing a non-capitalist approach to the social solidarity economy to address responsibilities for child care, of after-school care, sport and homework, of care of the aged and infirm, the community support to environmental health, sanitation, household waste management, must be taken forward as critical component of building socialism now. In this respect, the strategic refocusing of the Expanded Public Works Programme and Community Works Programme under the current leadership should enable expansion of social economy projects that enable migration of EPWP participants from stipends and work opportunities to sustainable work. The EPWP and CWP have a high percentage of beneficiaries who are women, and are an innovative offering from government to provide job safety net for unemployed people of working age. Early childhood development facilities enable women to participate in economic and community activity and in public life in new way while often also providing work opportunities for women and in particular for young women. The SACP should explore how EPWP and CWP can lead to the growth of non-capitalist/non-market productive economic opportunity for women and to changing the nature of what we currently see as a lop-sided gender division of labour in the home and the social reproductive activities. Women spend an average of 129 minutes a day in work that contributes to the GDP as opposed to 214 minutes per day for men; while women spend an average of 229 minutes per day in household production compared to 98 minutes for men. Women spend nearly 6 times as much time on average caring for people within the household than men. It is estimated that the unpaid labour of women contributes around 50% of the value of the GDP. (Figures based on Stats SA figures and on The Status of Women in the Economy Report 2015)

Local economic development is an approach towards economic development which allows and encourages local people to work together to achieve sustainable economic growth and development thereby bringing economic benefits and improved quality of life for all residents in local municipal area. Local economic development is intended to maximise economic potential of all municipal localities throughout country and, to enhance resilience of macro-economic growth through increased local economic growth, employment creation and development initiatives within context of sustainable development. It is imperative that local economic development enables sustained social solidarity economic development. The scope for local economic development plans to be enabling social solidarity economic activity should be a focus of Party policy development.

How can the financial sector campaign improve the lives of black working class women?

The SACP has championed financial inclusion of the working class, and has driven the **Financial Sector Campaign** focus on transformation of the financial sector. 75% of the adult population in South Africa

is formally banked, 5% are engaged with other formal financial non-bank products, 6% are informally served only, and 14% are not served whatsoever (FinScope South Africa 2014). South Africa moved from 44% of the female population who were formally banked in 2004 to 76% of women who were formally banked in 2014. In 2009, it was estimated that only 2,9% of women entrepreneurs received assistance from a commercial bank. This has led to a massive portion of adult woman population (just under 35%) in South Africa to rely heavily on savings circles or stokvels, government grants, and borrowing from money lenders (African Development Bank 2009). The Women Entrepreneurial Fund (WEF) which falls within the R1 billion Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) Transformation and Entrepreneurship Scheme (TES), has ring-fenced R400 million for women-owned businesses until 2015. Women entrepreneurs are directed to that R400 million to share between them, while the men-owned companies compete for the billions in the rest of the IDC.

Linked to the relative financial exclusion is the access to and control of property and assets by women. Studies by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor indicate that a far higher percentage of women entrepreneurs (as compared to men) are involved in informal sector (80% of female-owned businesses are informal, compared to 65% of male-owned businesses). Women also make up only 4,2% of executive directors of listed companies.

How can the party's struggle around land and agrarian reform empower black women?

While there are indicators of change such as the female traditional dwelling ownership having increased from 44.4 % in 2002 to 59.1 % in 2013 (StatsSA 2014), other programmes of restitution and redistribution are seriously gender biased. Land restitution programme benefited 726,952 people, with only about 62,077 (9%) of these beneficiaries being women, the other 91% were men. In the period 2005 – 2010, land redistribution and land tenure programmes benefited about 50,877 people of whom 18,284 (35.9%) were women. Internationally, women own less than 15 % of land and in South Africa, this is none the better (Bob, 2008 quoted in Status of Women in the South African Economy Report 2015).

The SACP must ensure that in addressing issues of human settlements, land and agrarian reform, women, and particularly black working class women are placed centrally as beneficiaries and participants in such programmes. Empowering women as contributors to food security and agricultural development is a significant transformation programme, particularly as women are also on receiving end of food insecurity and food prices

A socialist perspective on women's biological and health needs

Issues of girls and women biological menstrual needs, sexual and reproductive health rights, and maternal health are critical issues for working class women. Alexandra Kollontai has addressed the vastly different experiences of pregnancy and birth in the story, called "Working Woman and Mother" of 4 women, all called Mashenka: the wife of the factory director who is pampered and rests in her pregnancy; Mashenka the laundress who continues to work in an unhealthy hot laundry carrying heavy baskets from early morn till after dark; Mashenka the maid, who is fired for being pregnant and turned onto the street; and Mashenka the dye worker who collapses at work and is forced to carry on at work until her last day of pregnancy. (Selected Writing of Alexandra Kollontai, translated by Alix Holt, published by Allison and Busby, 1977) Each of the babies born to these women reflect their conditions – the wife of the factory director has a healthy and strong baby; the laundress has a skinny and wrinkled baby; Mashenka the maid gives birth under a fence and then commits suicide with the baby in a river; and the baby of Mashenka the dye worker is stillborn.

The South African maternal mortality rate as reported in the District Health Barometer looking at the 2015-16 makes visible the provincial discrepancies. Of the 1074 maternal deaths in the 2015-16 financial year,

In Limpopo 140.2 mothers died per 100 000 live births

In Gauteng 107.6 mothers died per 100 000 live births

In Mpumalanga 125.3 mothers died per 100 000 live births

In North West 148.1 mothers died per 100 000 live births

In Northern Cape 135,7 mothers died per 100 000 live births

In Free State 130.2 mothers died per 100 000 live births

In KwaZulu-Natal 121.1 mothers died per 100 000 live births

In Eastern Cape 135.2 mothers died per 100 000 live births

In Western Cape 69.6 mothers died per 100 000 live births

nor the working class angle of the death of women in birth. Of real concern is the extent of teenage pregnancy in South Africa and with it the increasing trend of new HIV infections among girls and young women in the 15-24 age bracket. A massive 15.8% of girls in the age group of 15-19 years had given birth or were currently pregnant. (NIDS 2012)

While the life expectancy has increased from 58.3 years in 2001 to 62.4 years in 2016, and the access in the prevention of mother to child transmission has shifted from 3.6% at six weeks in 2011 down to 1.5% at six weeks in 2016, the rate of new HIV infections amongst adolescent girls and young women remain alarmingly high. In addition, the rate of testing amongst men is reflecting a declining concern about the risk of HIV infection amongst men. This rate of new infections amongst girls and women in the 15-24 age range have multiple causes, often embedded in sexual violence against women and children, including in the form of incest within the family; in transactional sex – be it formal prostitution or the “Blesser or Sugar Daddy” phenomenon, a modern version of sex for progress in life or the “sleeping your way to the top” phenomenon; in the rife substance abuse which lowers inhibitions and self control leading to unforeseen consequences; in patriarchal attitudes in relation to consensual sex that can result in women not being able to assert themselves in the use of condoms and protection.

Educate a woman and you educate a village

In relation to gender parity within education and skills development, South Africa has something to be proud of. The adult female literacy rate 92.59. % and the youth female literacy rate 99.27% (UNESCO Institute for Stats 2015). Access to education on the basis of gender is measured by the gender parity line which shows the ratio of enrolled female learners to enrolled male learners of same appropriate school-age population. In 2010, Western Cape has a gender parity in favour of females. Limpopo in favour of males. Northern Cape showed no gender gap.

In 2010, girl and boy learners were almost equally represented in ordinary schools in South Africa (females 49.7% and males 50.3%). Analysed in the education phases, there were more males than females in foundation and intermediate phases, as many males as females in senior phase, and more females than males in other two phases. The highest percentage of females (52.6%) was found in FET band. Considering the pass rate in the National Senior Certificate exam in 2010, 66,5% of female

learners passed; compared to 69,3% of male learners who passed. However what these figures hide is what gains are being made in the education of the black rural working class girl?

The SACP in its engagement on the transformation of and funding of the higher education system must ensure that black working class girls and young women have access to the technical and academic skills of the higher education system, be it university or TVET based education.

Women are most vulnerable to inter-personal violence inherent in systems of exploitation

Whether in the world of work, in the space of schooling and higher education, in the private and often out of sight space of the home, abuse of and violence against women is rife in South Africa. The recently released crime statistics give little comfort that the scourge is being turned around when one accesses the stories of women from our communities, particularly those communities in social distress, and in rural and peri-urban environments.

As argued above unemployment, poverty and inequality have a social distress impact in working class communities and in families. Violence against women and children is escalating alarmingly, related to the increased distress that poverty, inadequate service delivery, unemployment, dependence on social grants bring to working class communities and families. Domestic violence, with incest seeming to be escalating, is shocking reality that must be addressed.

The SACP branches should ensure that no woman, no child, no older person, no vulnerable person is unsafe in their area. In many cases, women become victims of crime due to their vulnerability, caused by urban design, or rural social infrastructure that did not take their safety as a priority issue. Violence against women and children and gender based violence are crimes directed against a person because of their gender and covers a range of forms of violence – domestic violence including marital rape, sexual harassment, rape, human trafficking, ukuthwala a form of trafficking or kidnapping. Recent evidence has reflected communities in which women and girls live in fear of incest and rape with the family, serial rapists who are able to avoid the enforcement of the law, rape of elderly women in the belief that it is older women and not young girls who can cure men of HIV/AIDS, and femicide where women and girls are killed by their intimate partners.

The elimination of violence against girls, women, elderly women and disabled women is critical for women to be able to play their rightful and active role in the home, community, in leadership and to be actively involved in productive economic activity. The prevention, elimination and enforcement of the law in relation to violence against women and children requires a multi-pronged, multi-sectoral strategy. The SACP Districts and branches led by the District Secretaries must become champions of a cultural revolution against patriarchy and violence, particularly against women and children. The mass organisation of communities to defence themselves, to establish appropriate cultural practices in relation to the conduct of familial and gender relations is critical. While the work of the state in both social development and in the criminal justice system must be intensified, the eradication of violence against women and children requires the full mobilisation of communities. The scourge of violence against women and children is an anathema to socialist morality and practice.

Trends in relation to women committing crime are changing in South Africa. In 2012, approximately 3500 women were in South Africa correctional centres compared to about 142 000 men incarcerated in correctional centres. The majority of women were in for poverty related crime; many were in for crimes committed in support of their men; but there has been increasing trend of women incarcerated for serious violent crime. The importance of understanding the triggers to these changing patterns of crime is critical for the SACP to be able to formulate our policy on safety and crime in the building of a socialist future in which working class communities must be at the centre of the services from the criminal justice system.

Women, and in particular working class women, still face challenges such as unsafe or badly designed built environments; they are often victims of crime in their community; the burden of inadequate basic services falls unevenly on the shoulders of the women members of the community. Historically for majority of women, access to housing has been largely through relationship with man. Water access, particularly for rural women is classic example in which the delivery of basic water and sanitation service can have a major positive impact on the lives of working class and rural women. In relation to health services for women, the specific needs of women's health, women's access to quality care and how the National Health Insurance will enable women to access health care differently must be the concern of the SACP.

The Party and COSATU must address the issue of the best model of child care services for working class families – childcare facilities at places of work that are important for breast feeding mothers; community based childcare services that prevent babies and toddlers spending hours in public transport; other models of childcare and family responsibility leave. In this regard, the manner in which the Municipal Infrastructure Grant programme, which is aimed at providing all South Africans with at least basic level of service through provision of grant finance aimed at covering capital cost of basic infrastructure for poor addresses the needs of working class families and women in particular. The Municipal Infrastructure Grant programme is a key part of government's overall drive to alleviate poverty in country and, therefore, infrastructure is to be provided in such way that employment is maximised and opportunities are created for enterprises to flourish. A gender analysis of the impact of Municipal Infrastructure Grant programme would evaluate the extent to which it has transformed gender relations at municipal level and empowered women, changed their access to services, provided them with better social and physical protection and how it can provide infrastructure for a social solidarity economy to develop.

SACP, state power, and mass power for women's emancipation

The Central Committee in the deliberations and enrichment of the political report of the 19th Plenary of the 13th Congress Central Committee has correctly focused on the need for the Party to engage on both state power and the building of mass power, recognising that building a socialist future requires working class hegemonic influence within the state and in the mass formation of the working class and their relationship with the state and the Party. For the woman question, the Party, state power and mass power must be approached in a manner that builds organised strength of black working class women inside the Party, inside the state and in engagement with the state, and in the mass formations led by the working class.

The battle of ideas against patriarchy

The assertion of working class hegemony in the Battle of Ideas must entail the voice of black working class women's interests being clearly and loudly heard. The ideological structures of society, both within the state and public sector, the private sector and community media are critical in crafting and sustaining stereotypes and peoples' attitudes and in changing them. The impact in particular of electronic media, social media and TV on the value formation of our young people, and the reinforcement of values in us as adults should not be under estimated. The Party has an enormous responsibility to provide the alternative value system to this powerful ideological institution, in particular on issues of racism, elitism and sexism. The classic arguments as to why adverts insist on using women to draw the consumers attention to the commodity for sale reflect the commodification of women's bodies. Is it the women who is for sale or the car?! As the Party engages with the counter-revolutionary attitude of the capitalist media and other ideological institutions, we should also engage with the sexist approach to women and the consumerism that is punted so virulently through women as message carriers in advertising and media.

Mass organising of women of working class communities around their daily lives

The SACP has a powerful history of organising working class women - as exploited workers, as nationally oppressed people, and as oppressed women. Often the SACP has utilised organising working class women around the issues that affect them directly as an entry point.

For example, the need for women to know that their children are safe, fed, and developed while women are working or involved in their housework and care responsibilities has been a frequent starting point for mobilising women. Cde Dora Tamana, whose work amongst the women started during the war when there was a food shortage, heard Councillor Cissie Gool talking about child care in the Soviet Union. In one of her many obituaries, her work with women is recorded (Schreiner, J: 1983 Obituary for Dora Tamana). There every mother could leave their children in a crèche or nursery school when she went to work. Cde Dora was concerned about the children in her community.

“I worried that children of the working mothers had no one to teach them, and to look after them while their mothers were working. I wanted to have a crèche for them, and I had a small group, and taught them by drawing on the sand outside the pondokkie where I lived.”

Cde Dora started by working as a child-minder for the other women of the area. She took twenty children into her house while their mothers were at work. But she was not satisfied with this, and so organised people to assist her and together they built a crèche. But within a year, the government declared Blaauwlei a “coloured area” under the Group Areas Act. This nursery school was the present Cde Dora left the people of Retreat, and there are still children enjoying the product of her hard work and dedication today. Mama Dora said:

“Coloured children need the nursery school as much as the African children did. They can use it until the day comes, as it will do, when children of all races, African, Coloured and white, will use it together.”

Indeed the Party, COSATU and the ANC established a crèche for babies of staff employed in the Head Offices of the Alliance organisations in the early 1990s. This was followed by Party cadres leading the process to establish a crèche in Parliament in the first democratic Parliament after 1994, to accommodate children of Parliamentary workers, staff, MPs and Ministers. Neither of these initiatives has been sustained, in part due to individual members involved in them moving to other areas of work and responsibility. What potential is there for the SACP Provinces to work with EPWP to re-establish progressive crèches and child care centres where the children of at least Alliance and affiliate staff are accommodated and stimulated to grow to their full human potential? Should the South African Parliament not re-establish the Parliamentary crèche as a model for workplace child care facilities?

The issue of food security and poverty has been a recurring theme in mobilising of women in this country. The Party in the 1940s, under the leadership amongst others of Cde Ray Alexander, took up a bread price campaign which had a profound mobilising effect on women in the Western Cape. There were Women’s Food Committee set up during the 1950s. In 1982, the United Women’s Organisation adopted two organising themes – child care and high prices. The SACP under the leadership of Cde Chris Hani adopted the Triple H Campaign around housing, health and hunger, in the 1990s – again addressing the burning issues that place working class families in distress, the significant impact of which is carried by working class women.

Party cadres have never simply organised around a daily life issue, without ensuring that the beneficiaries of that work also understand the politics of working class daily life issues – developing political and class consciousness of women.

Infusing empowerment of women into SACP trade union commission work

In the 1930s, the SACP Cape Town District Committee decided to concentrate on organising women into the National Liberation League, into the ANC, and into the trade union movement. The likes of Cde Cissy Gool and Cde Dora Tamana joined the Party in this time. This path breaking organising work among women resulted in the formation of the Women's League as women began to demand recognition in the ANC.

In the programme of work to strengthen the labour movement, the historic programme of COSATU, well articulated in the 2012 National Gender Conference, on women's empowerment and gender equality must be embedded in the strengthened affiliates, not as a side programme, but as integral to recruiting women workers, cadre development and in driving the programme of action of the federation. The theme of the 2012 conference: "Fight Inequalities, Promote Decent Work and Build Economic Alternatives for the Total Emancipation of Women" and its key demands in the context of the National Minimum Wage and the Comprehensive Security Policy Framework lay a strong basis for joint SACP and COSATU campaigning. The key demands advanced by COSATU speak to key issues impeding women's full emancipation :

- 1. Promotion of Decent Work and Social Protection for All.**
- 2. Bargaining Agenda for Gender/ Collective Bargaining.**
- 3. Developing Cadres for Political Education.**

The current COSATU National Officer Bearers have the second Deputy President and the Treasurer positions being held by women. Women leaders in COSATU affiliates averaged 8% in provincial leadership in 1994 increasing to 15% in 1996; and averaging 8% in national leadership in both 1994 and 1996, with FAWU, SACTWU, NEHAWU and SASBO having the highest levels of women leadership. There has not, it seems, been recent analysis of the leadership gender equity ratios in COSATU affiliated. The leadership question however can obscure the gender statistics of the trade unions themselves and analysis of the extent to which working class women are organised into unions and the steps to address any blockages to unionising of women workers must be attended to. A question that must be posed is how strong are the unions in the sectors of industry where the majority of women workers are employed and whether the unions in which there are a majority of women, those in the clothing, retail, services and public sector, are in fact electing women as apex leaders. Has, for example, SACTWU had a women as the General Secretary?

As the Party strives to support the organising work of strengthening industrial unions, it is imperative that the level of skills development amongst women union members and the leadership role of women in organised labour formations is addressed through COSATU's cadre policy, developing depth of women leadership in the trade unions. COSATU and its affiliates should be torch bearers in the campaign and actions against sexual harassment in the workplace. COSATU and its affiliates must also strengthen the implementation of the policy to prevent sexism within labour movement and within the workplace. It is of note that the CCMA indicates that few women workers are utilising their institution and skills to address discriminatory practices within the workplace.

For or against a mass women's organisation?

The Party has never had a women's league nor sought to build one. However, we have a strong history of organising women as women into the mass democratic movement. In the 50s, Party women members led in the formation of a non-racial broad federation of women around a Women's Charter, a foundational document based on a Marxist analysis of women's oppression. Party women cadres

have taken their place in the armed struggle, the trade union movement, the women's formations, in the mass democratic movement. Party propaganda kept the woman question alive and continued to apply Marxism Leninism to the contemporary position of working class women.

In the 1980s, Party women cadres, guided and supported by Party stalwarts both inside and outside the country, played a critical role in the formation and building of mass based women's organisations across South Africa, which formed a powerful working class oriented women's movement in the United Democratic Front in the 1980s. This organised and politicised movement of women has largely been demobilised by the disbanding of these organisations in favour of the re-establishing of the ANC Women's League, which unfortunately did not embed the mass organisation and mass mobilisation practices of these 1980s organisations into their practice as the League was re-established inside the country. One could also make an interesting observation that many former women Party cadres of the 1970s, 80s and 90s, who in the process of rising to positions of power in government, in the governing party, in international organisations, have moved away from a working class vanguard orientation in their practice.

Alexandra Kollontai discussed whether there was basis for a cross-class women's movement and argued that working class women will more easily identify in struggle alongside their working class menfolk than to side with bourgeois women against men. As indicated above this was reflected in the 1954 Women's Charter. However the nature of South African non-racial and cross-class organisation has provided platform for women to unite around a common programme both in the 1950s and in the period of the democratic transition in the Women's National Coalition. The South African experience of relative discrimination by women across classes has provided a unique opportunity for mobilisation of cross class alliances of women with a fair degree of support of working class women's interests.

In this current period, with the Progressive Women's Movement of South Africa being the vehicle for the non-racial, cross-class and broad women's movement, the SACP should note that organising a women's movement without strong political and economic organisation of working class women is likely to result in working class women being sucked into a middle class agenda, the dominant ideology, neo-liberal and corrupt practices at expense of own class interests. This would be an unforgivable revolutionary blunder.

Inner party work on the woman question

In the period since the unbanning, the Party has had focused programmes for the development of women cadres and election of women into leadership of Party structures; has established a functioning Gender Sub Committee or Commission of the Central Committee; has adopted the approach of targeted recruitment and empowerment of women; has held effective Conferences of Women Commissars a significant initiative to deepen consciousness of women Party members and training ourselves to be defenders of working class women's interests. The SACP should consider holding regular Conferences of Commissars focusing on the Woman Question and Gender Struggle and the Commissars to attend such a conference must be the leading men and women of Districts, Provinces and the CC itself.

Gender as a concept has become part of the SACP theoretical equipment, but with a particular meaning. Gender is part of the concept "class", and class is a component of the concept "gender". No class is a monolithic entity. Every class has gender inequalities within it. Women are not a homogeneous group – there are serious class differences among women. Similarly in discussion of the national question, class and gender dynamics must be taken into account.

The South African Road to Socialism -the 13th Congress Political Programme of the SACP 2012-2017 gives clear direction on organising around the woman Question and Gender issues:

"Whilst there is a distinct relationship between women's and gender struggles, struggles for progressive gender transformation will be severely hampered if there is no sustained organisation and mobilisation of women. In its own recruitment, the SACP must aim to recruit more women workers into the Party, with particular attention being given to the more marginalised strata of the working class where there tends to be a preponderance of women (domestic workers, farm workers, service sector, co-operatives, stokvels and hawkers)

"Historically there has been uneven participation of women communists in the structures of the ANC Women's League. The SACP must encourage our women cadres, particularly those from the working class, to actively participate in the structures of the League.

"The SACP must ensure that our campaigns and organisational structures create the necessary institutional and organisational practices and environment to facilitate the fullest participation of women. Particularly attention must also be paid to the education of all cadres in gender equality and the need to confront all patriarchal practices and stereotypes within our organisation and work." (South African Road to Socialism SARS p122)

To do this, it is argued we must reconsider the location of gender within one of the CC commissions, currently the Gender and Social Transformation Commission, and consider the following approach:

- The Party Building Commission must be tasked with special attention to the challenges of organising women into the Party, retaining them in the Party, building their Marxist-Leninist ideological prowess and providing the paths for promotion into leadership positions within the Party.
- The Economic Transformation Commission must ensure that the Financial Sector Campaign addresses the particular forms of exclusion and discrimination against women, and working class women in particular. The Party in addressing evictions, agrarian reform and land access must ensure that women are not inadvertently discriminated against through allocations to households where ownership and control is actually embedded in the male "head of household". The issue of childcare for working class families is critical to the woman question.
- The Social Transformation Commission must be concerned with the health, educational, and safety needs of women. Violence within the family, workplace and society must be prioritised within the Party programme as its escalation eats at the fabric of these communities and is part of a vicious cycle of human distress.
- The Trade Union commission in its work to rebuild the industrial unions, to campaign about the National Minimum Wage and to ensure that year on year it improves the income of working class families, must ensure that this is not at the expense of women workers.
- The Battle of Ideas Committee must take the issue of the manner in which the media, and the social media in particular, portray women, prop up the patriarchal commodification of women, and promotion of women as either housewives and carers or as sex objects and seldom as equal citizens taking opportunities to live to their full potential.
- The International Committee of the SACP must be at the forefront of establishing appropriate relationships with the women in sister Communist Parties and should enable the SACP to re-establish itself as a member of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), the international forum for left women's forces. The Cuban Secretariat of the WIDF has noted the

abstinence of the Communist and Socialist Parties and former liberation movements of Southern African in WIDF. WIDF should be strengthened and built into a powerful voice of working class women the world over to shift the gender agenda internationally to one that reflects working class hegemony in the battle of ideas on gender.

These are by no means complete gender programmes for each CC Commission and Committee. In essence, a socialist future that is not built on the integration of programme addressing the position of working class women in every aspect of Party work, will result in continued exploitation of women.

The Party has experience of organising crèches or child care at Party meetings to enable women to bring small children to meetings and know that they are safe so women, and even fathers, can concentrate on the discussion of the meeting. This practice has fallen by the way side? Why because that cadre of women CC members who established it have move beyond child bearing age? This cannot be acceptable.

The Women Commissars Conference in 2014, identified that Party structures need to understand the burden on working class women to work, to be wife or girlfriend, to even be mother, cook and cleaner and on top of all that to be a Party activist. Branch meetings that take place in the evening when women are expected to be bathing the babies, cooking the meals and looking after the husband will prevent the Party from recruiting women, or even keeping the women members active. As Party members we have to steer the delicate course between showing respect for women's role in the family while also organising for changes within this patriarchal set up – a complex balance.

In conclusion

The material base for women's emancipation has to be multi-fold, including the integration of women into economy without gender discrimination, ensuring the development of social solidarity economy, equalising of gender division of labour within household, and addressing gender equity in societal institutions and processes.

In all social organisation, classes consist of men and women, and women's lived experience across the social classes is radically different. Even features, such as menstruation, gender based violence, food security, that cut across class, are experienced differently by women of different classes. All cultural groups and nations consist of men and women – but that very culture, tradition, and nationhood give women different experiences from each other and from men. The relationship to mode of production, and its form of reproduction, remains the starting point of understanding experiences of women. As the relations of production change in a global economy, working class women's experiences and social positions in power relations in society change. Patriarchy is social construct and hence subject to change, and eradication. Organising working class women into broad working class community based women's organisations, into trade unions, into social solidarity economic formations, and into the vanguard of the working class, the SACP, is essential to ensure that working class struggle includes actively fighting for the interests of working class women and girls.

Writing in 1996, we asked the question "What are prospects for gender transformation in South Africa?" and argued that

"South Africa has within it both seeds of gender transformation and seeds of entrenched gender oppression. [The] challenge is to ensure that gains made in constitutional struggles, and in structures of government, do not only benefit elite women, but empower working class and poor women in rural and urban areas. The seeds of transformation can liberate lives of working class women. Which seeds will eventually become rooted and nurtured depends on strategy and struggle based on correct understanding of interconnection between oppressive social



relations and women's oppression. Such strategy and struggle must go along with appropriate organisational forms to carry out objectives. Without this, neither the emancipation of women nor the transformation of society to non-gender-oppressive social formation will be realisable." (Jenny Schreiner, 1996)

What conditions are necessary for the ending of the oppression and exploitation of women to be achieved? It is only where means of production and reproduction are socialised, where the working class men and women are hegemonic, with women of this class are fully empowered at home, in community and in economy, that women can be truly freed. But equally, socialism cannot be achieved without the end of oppression of women. To quote Lenin again: "the proletariat cannot achieve complete freedom unless it achieves complete freedom for women." (Lenin 1920 To Working Women.)

As Engels has argued in the *Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*, socialised production is necessary for the end to exploitation and oppression of women. But as has been argued above, socialised production without attending to the form of reproduction, will not address the patriarchal relations so deeply embedded in the capitalist system, and all hereto forms of class exploitation.

If class struggle and social transformation is to bring empowerment of women, and an end to exploitation and oppression for women, our struggle must be gender sensitive on all fronts –

- in struggle around access to, control of and socialisation of the means of production;
- in struggle over the social organisation of reproduction;
- in struggles for working class hegemony in instruments of ideological reproduction of social relations;
- in struggles to direct the instruments of justice and law, mechanisms of governance, and instruments of security and state to prioritise the socio-economic interests of the working class, and of black working class women in particular.

Socialism does bring purely a new economic system. It incorporates a new form of political life, new political structures and a new form of state. Socialism requires changed ideological and cultural practices and different forms of family life. The balance between all aspects of people's lives must change under socialism, not driven by the overriding imperative of profit maximisation for the capitalist ruling class and elite. If socialism is to liberate both men and women it must be based on transformed gender relations, based on a strong social/solidarity economy, and socialised productive relations.

Building socialism requires emancipating women. Emancipating women requires socialism. Socialist struggle in South Africa requires struggle to change the lives of black working class women in every site of struggle. That must be the line of march of the South African Communist Party under the leadership of the 14th Congress Central Committee.

A Luta Continua!

Defend, Advance, Deepen the National Democratic Revolution:

The vanguard role of the SACP!!

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GLOSSARY

“The point is not merely to understand the world, but to change it.” Karl Marx (1818 – 1883)

Our theory on the woman question, on the struggle against patriarchy, or the struggle for gender transformation must be clear to all Party members as this informs our approach to organising for women’s radical socio-economic empowerment and emancipation and for gender equality. It is useful to have a glossary of terms that ensures our approach is scientific and located within our understanding of the social relations of production.

The sex of a person refers to a person’s biological status and is typically categorized as male, female, or intersex (i.e. atypical combinations of features that usually distinguish male from female). There are a number of indicators of biological sex, including sex chromosomes, gonads, internal reproductive organs, and external genitalia. Science is currently providing evidence that the spectrum of gender determinants is far more complex than the historically understood binary understanding of the X and Y chromosome.

Historically the term **Woman** refers to a female human being; seen as a biological category, as is female, meaning: of or denoting the sex that can bear offspring or produce eggs, distinguished biologically by the production of gametes (ova) which can be fertilized by male gametes.

Gender is a social construct which refers to the attitudes, feelings, and behaviours that a given society and culture associates with a person’s biological sex. Behaviour that is compatible with cultural expectations is referred to as gender-normative; behaviours that are viewed as incompatible with these expectations constitute gender non-conformity.

Gender relations defines relationship between position of men and position of women in society. Gender relations are the social relations between the sexes, the way in which society shapes access to resources, and power relations. The concept of gender relations as social construct enables us to challenge stereotypes that are often portrayed as natural – for example, “men are stronger than women” - biology and scientific knowledge can be used as basis of empower or oppress

Women’s Emancipation is a concept based on Karl Marx’s concept of political emancipation in On the Jewish Question 1844: - “equal status of individual citizens in relation to state, equality before law, regardless of religion, property, or other “private” characteristics of individual people.” Women’s emancipation is therefore focused on emancipation as efforts to procuring political rights, human rights, equality.

Women’s Empowerment refers to full inclusion of women the social, political and economic life of the nation and society. It is however a non-specific and general term that can be used within a capitalist accumulation model; can be used to focus on promotion of elite women into leadership positions; if used in Party literature and thinking it needs to be given specific socialist content.

Gender Equality refers to a society in which economic, social and political relations are based on equal access, parity and equal rights between men and women, in all spheres and institutions of society.

Gender Transformation refers to change of engendered power relations as defined by capitalism, racism and patriarchy to socially defined equitable gender relations that are not oppressive and non-exploitative. Gender Transformation must include and be included in struggles against all forms of oppression and exploitation.

Gender identity refers to “one’s sense of oneself as male, female, or trans-gender” (American Psychological Association, 2006). When one’s gender identity and biological sex are not congruent, the individual may identify as trans-sexual or as another trans-gender category (cf. Gainor, 2000).

Gender expression refers to the “...way in which a person acts to communicate gender within a given culture; for example, in terms of clothing, communication patterns and interests. A person’s gender expression may or may not be consistent with socially prescribed gender roles, and may or may not reflect his or her gender identity” (American Psychological Association, 2008, p. 28).

Sexual orientation refers to the sex of those to whom one is sexually and romantically attracted. Categories of sexual orientation typically have included attraction to members of one’s own sex (gay men or lesbians), attraction to members of the other sex (heterosexuals), and attraction to members of both sexes (bisexuals). Research has suggested that sexual orientation does not always appear in such definable categories and instead occurs on a continuum (e.g., Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, and Gebhard, 1953; Klein, 1993; Klein, Sepekoff, and Wolff, 1985; Shiveley and DeCecco, 1977) In addition, some research indicates that sexual orientation is fluid for some people; this may be especially true for women (e.g., Diamond, 2007; Golden, 1987; Peplau and Garnets, 2000).

Key South Africa legislation that embeds women’s equality and rights in law

- **Legislation relating to the promotion, protection and enforcement of human rights:** the Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2 of 2000; the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 3 of 2000; and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 4 of 2000 (often called Equality Act and PEPUA)
- **Legislation supporting equality in the economy and the workplace:** the Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998; the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 11 of 2002; the Unemployment Insurance Act, 63 of 2001
- **Legislation providing support to Chapter-9 institutions:** the Human Rights Commission Act, 54 of 1994; the Public Protector Act, 23 of 1994; and the Commission for Gender Equality Act, 39 of 1996
- **Legislation pertaining to the social and physical protection:** Child Justice Act, 75 of 2008; Children’s Act, 38 of 2005; Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, 32 of 2007, Maintenance Act, 99 of 1998; Domestic Violence Act, 116 of 1998; Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act, 92 of 1996; Protection from Harassment Act, 71 of 2011; Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, 7 of 2013;
- **International Instruments on women’s empowerment and gender equality signed and ratified by South Africa:** The Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform of Action, AU and SADC Protocols on gender and women’s equality reinforce the domestic law on these matters.



Roll back inequality in access to water and sanitation

Deal corruption and rent-seeking a decisive blow in water, sanitation and related municipal services!

Introduction

In 1994, an estimated 12 million South Africans did not have access to safe water, and around 20 million did not have adequate sanitation - this of a population in the order of 36 million. Moreover, very few black South Africans used any significant quantities of water for productive uses, or had a formal water entitlement in their own name. Water use was concentrated amongst the white population. The dispossession of water rights occurred under the territorial segregation that happened in South Africa. The Irrigation and Conservation of Water Act of 1912 ingrained the 'lawful' appropriation of most of the nation's water resources by whites. Riparian land ownership already accrued exclusively to whites under the British title deed system, so, by tying water rights to land, the related water resources were appropriated with a stroke of the pen.

The water sector in South Africa has experienced radical changes since 1994 and the subsequent introduction of new policies and legislation, namely, the White Papers on a National Water Policy for South Africa (RSA 1997) and on Water Services (RSA 1994), the National Water Act (RSA 1998) and the Water Services Act (RSA 1997a). Significant changes in water management were driven by the need to create more socially just, economically efficient and environmentally sound water management and allocation regimes in the country, in addition to bringing safe water and sanitation to the vast number of South Africans left unserved by the apartheid regime. The period of policy and legislative reform has been followed by nearly two decades of implementation of new approaches spanning most aspects of water management. However, despite the significant efforts that have been put into implementation, there are major challenges facing the water sector that need to be addressed in the interests of the working class and people living in poverty. This paper addresses these current, critical challenges and possible options for addressing them at the policy and implementation level.

1.1. Water and sanitation needs for people living in poverty and the working class

The working class and the large number of people living in poverty in South Africa need reliable water supplies for meeting their human right to water, which is enshrined in international law and in the Constitution of South Africa. In South African legislation this currently covers water for drinking, cooking, and hygiene, and is set at 25 litres per person per day accessible within 200m of a household. For practical purposes this has been translated into 6 000 litres per household per month. As per national policy, this water is to be provided free of charge to indigent households.

However, people living in poverty in rural areas and peri-urban areas also need water to grow crops, vegetables and water livestock to meet their human right to food. This is not yet addressed in South African policy or legislation.

In addition, people living in poverty and the working class need water to support income generating activities whether small-scale farming or small-enterprises such as car-washing, hair salons, etc.

Finally, reliable water supplies are a necessary input all enterprises that provide jobs to workers, although some enterprises are far more water intensive than others.

Reliability of water supply implies a regular supply of sufficient quantity (with minimal interruptions) of a suitable quality for purpose. For example, water for drinking, cooking and hygiene must be of potable quality while water for growing food does not need to be of potable quality, but should not be contaminated with, for example, pathogens, heavy metals, or dangerous chemicals which might leave a residue on food or be taken up into food.

The working class and people living in poverty also need adequate sanitation facilities and appropriate hygiene practices as part of the right to an environment not harmful to health or well-being and the right to dignity.

People's needs and access are different

While the standards for basic water supply and sanitation are the same for all people, there are different groups who have different needs, and different levels of access to services. Power and privilege play out through a range of determinants that often intersect and compound each other. In addition to the issue of class and income, discrimination in access to water and sanitation is compounded by factors such as gender, location, ethnicity, race, age and disability.

One of the critical issues in this regard is that of gender discrimination, not least because women generally have the primary responsibility for the management of the household water supply, sanitation and health. Despite this, women are often not part of the decision-making processes around water, sanitation and hygiene education. Women and children, particularly girl children, bear the brunt of the lack of sanitation facilities, including exposure to physical assault and rape when walking to remote locations to defecate, often at night to avoid the exposure of defecating in public during the day (COHRE et al. 2008). In urban areas women and girls face security risks and other dangers when they use public sanitation facilities. Lack of access to safe and affordable menstrual hygiene management measures is also a significant issue for women and girls, not only at home, but also, critically, at school. Girls and women also have water and sanitation requirements related to menstrual hygiene and lack of appropriate facilities may lead, for example, to girls missing school when menstruating. The final point relates to the fact the contaminants in water affect male and female bodies differently, and often less is known about the impacts of poor water quality on women and girl children.

For people with disabilities, inappropriate water supply and sanitation facilities may mean an inability to physically access toilets or reach hand washing facilities, or carry water from public standpipes, springs or rivers. Over the past 20 years the issue of access to water and sanitation for people with disabilities has not been sufficiently addressed in either policy or legislation. This is, however, changing with recent amendments to the minimum norms and standards under the Water Services Act specifically addressing the issue of disability, but change still needs to happen on the ground.

In addition, there are other particularly disadvantaged groups in relation to water services and sanitation, and water for productive enterprises, including farm workers and people living in informal settlements on private land, people in dispersed rural settlements, the homeless, and people living in hijacked buildings in inner city areas. As always, those with least access to decent water and sanitation services are the poorest and most marginalised.

Discussion

2.1. Addressing inequity in access to water

Historical legacy

In 1994, access to water was highly unequal along race, gender and class lines. The Gini Coefficient for water use was 0.99. Hardly any black men, let alone black women, had a formal entitlement to use water; their land in the former homelands, on large-scale farms or in the townships was state land and customary or local water investment and governance arrangements were not recognised in any formal system. The water development and governance structures that underpinned this inequity were entirely embedded in the apartheid state structures. This boosted the formal minority economy and purposively discouraged any informal economic activity by black people, including the water needs for such activities. Black people's water needs were narrowly defined in terms of water for basic domestic uses, and, at best, micro-scale productive uses (for 'subsistence'). The water services for such basic domestic water needs, in the townships and former homelands, were mediocre, and, not surprisingly, the object of widespread boycotts.

The apartheid's government support to smallholder irrigation schemes, as in Limpopo, KZN and the Eastern Cape, primarily served to divide and rule by pacifying allied chiefs, including those removed from 'black spots' in white areas; to provide subsidised employment to the – highly skilled - white engineering fraternity in the parastatals; to control male outmigration, including by promoting the flattering concept of the male household head as privileged plot holder and member of irrigation groups (in spite of the fact that farming was, and continued to be largely done by women; and in spite of the refusal to pay family wages and promotion of male hostels in the former white areas); and to ensure food security in former homelands as, even then, most food was imported from the large-scale farmers in the former white areas.

Failure to redress

This legacy has changed very little in the 23 years of democracy. Since 1998, only 1,6% of new water use licences issued have gone to black water users. Several trends contributed to this, including the following:

First, the sudden dismantling of the apartheid structures of service delivery in the former homelands, both for municipal supplies for domestic water uses and in irrigation schemes, were justified on political grounds. However, the result was that even the mediocre services collapsed. The 'beneficiaries' of these irrigation and domestic water services bore the brunt. Production in smallholder schemes declined dramatically. The establishment of alternative water services, irrigation investments and governance arrangements that fill the void has hardly progressed, despite that intention expressed in the National Development Plan (2012) to expand irrigation, primarily benefiting smallholders, by another 500 000 ha.

Second, efforts to redress past inequities in access to water are facing a reinvigorated determination of the current water users to defend, at all costs, their past appropriation of water resources. This anti-poor determination is especially visible in the persistent avoidance of any debate about implementation of a redistribution of water resources from the haves to the have-nots. The Water Allocation Reform programme of DWS set a goal that 60 percent of allocable water should be in black hands by 2024. This aim is contained in the legally binding National Water Resource Strategy (2nd edition). However, not a drop has changed hands through this programme. If this policy aim is discussed at all, the tendency is to interpret the notion of 'allocable' water as referring only to additional available water, instead of the country's entire water resource assets.

Similarly, the NWRS indicates a progressive prioritisation of water: after the priorities for the Reserve (which encompasses a basic human needs reserve for water for domestic uses, and an ecological reserve) and for international obligations, the third highest priority is for water for poverty eradication. This is a higher priority than for strategic water uses (which is basically for electricity generation) and for water uses that require a license. However, this third priority has not been operationalised in any meaningful manner. On the contrary, when the allocation of water resources is discussed, the responsibility for meeting the Reserve and international obligations is implicitly supposed to be equally borne by those who barely use any water.

Indeed, there is a startling contradiction between the government's concerns to redistribute land on the one hand and, on the other hand, the continued silencing of debate of the redistribution of water. Even worse, as a result of the administrative fragmentation between the DRDLR and DWS, the water rights appurtenant to land under claim have often been hived off and sold, so that the land reform beneficiaries received land without water entitlements. This administrative fragmentation is a third factor contributing to the situation that the legacy of the past not only continues, but the gaps in access to water between the – still largely black poor – and increasingly more mixed middle class have even been widened.

People's initiatives

Significantly, this void of pro-poor water development and governance structures has started to be filled by poor people and the working class themselves, typically in informal economies in rural and peri-urban areas, outside the ambit of the state. In Limpopo Province, the mapping of irrigated areas through remote sensing found that the area irrigated in the winter of 2015 in the former homelands, amounted to almost 100 000 ha. As the area (potentially) irrigated in this province by public irrigation schemes is some 20000 ha, this finding implies that informal and self-financed irrigation, largely by smallholders, is up to four times as large (Cai et al 2017). Also, it has widely been observed that rural water infrastructure designed for a single use, either domestic uses or irrigation, is, in reality used for multiple water needs. This includes back yard gardening, which aligns with the widespread contraction of cropping from fields to backyards. Currently, the back yard is the main place of activity in 84 percent of agricultural households (SSA 2016). Although the NWRS 2nd volume also recognises the need to provide rural water services to meet both domestic and productive water needs, these self-financed initiatives to meet constitutional rights to water and food, at no cost to the tax payer, are typically met with suspicion by the state, if not overtly declared as unlawful until a license has been issued. At the same time, the NWRS 2nd volume states that the "current licensing processes are often costly, very lengthy, bureaucratic and inaccessible to many South Africans".

Agenda for change

The challenge is to operationalise and implement the well-established political goals of redress in access to water, including the addition of 500 000 ha of irrigation for smallholders. Actions are primarily a matter of alignment within the state apparatus between goals and actions, and alignment within and between departments, to improve access to water to boost informal economies.

Within the DWS

Regulatory and water allocation functions should align with DWS' programmes to support water developmental for the poor. The marginalisation of black people's water entitlements in former homelands, and former white rural areas and townships, urgently needs to be addressed. A principled and pragmatic approach that aligns with the high priority in the NWRS 2nd volume is to take all existing water uses as being 'existing lawful uses', and protect all water uses that serve basic domestic and productive water needs. Moreover, any existing indigenous arrangements to share water, settle

disputes and avoid pollution, and 'not to deny anybody water uses for basic consumption and nutrition' are to be nurtured.

Within DWS and between DWS, CogTA/municipalities, and DAFF and DRDLR

The call of the NWRS-2 to develop participatory approaches that meet people's multiple water needs to be implemented. Perhaps the most precious asset in this endeavor is people's own investment in infrastructure and creativity to transform narrowly, single-used designed water infrastructure into multiple use systems, and their local knowledge on how to combine multiple water sources through multi-purpose infrastructure as the rule, and single-use infrastructure as the exception. This requires awareness raising and coordination between DWS, CoGTA and the municipal systems, and DAFF and DRDLR.

Social development and employment generation programmes, such as the Extended Public Works Programme and Community Water Programme, should be included as well. A major question is how to transform these programmes from providing temporary labour provision to generating self-sustaining (self-) employment. Water is vital component of such self-employment. If the choice for activities to be done with the acquired labor is left to local communities, they often opt to improve their water situation, and would design integrated projects, considering their multiple water needs and multiple sources and options for multi-purpose infrastructure.

Champion initiatives

Coordination needs champions with mandates at the highest levels to catalyse collaboration. Moreover, such champions can address the most critical voids. One such void is the lack of a champion to promote the design, manufacturing, dissemination and uptake of participatory technology design, that include women at equal par, and that allows appropriate technology choices for small-scale water users. The designation of such a champion department is critical to ensure sustainable rural development.

Last but not least, coordination with land reform initiatives are particularly important. This will not only avoid that water rights are hived off land that is being transferred. It will, finally, also bundle the forces to address the fundamental question of agrarian reform, including its re-allocation of the country's natural resource endowments.

2.2. Serving the poorest and most marginalised

"I live in a squatter camp since 2006. We have no electricity, water we fetch from far, we don't have toilets. They have been saying they will fix toilets and roads but they haven't. Even the houses, we have been registering but nothing has happened," said Ntomowa Nkabinde, Ermelo resident.

According to the Stats SA Community Survey 2016, 44% of households surveyed had access to water through piped water inside their dwelling, 34% had access to piped water inside their yard, 17% had access to piped water from an access point outside the yard, while 4,4% had no access to piped water. If this is extrapolated to the national level, over 2,5 million people do not have access to piped water, which means that they are obtaining their water from other sources such as springs, rivers, irrigation canals, wells, or buying water from other people who do have access to piped water (see figure 1). According to the 2011 census, 2,2 million households still lack access to RDP standard water supply, and over five million households, or 33% of households, experience problems with their supply due to the poor condition of water supply infrastructure and poor management by water services providers.

The people that lack access to decent services are primarily located in informal settlements, in 'hijacked'

inner city blocks, in the rural areas, are farmworkers or people living in informal settlements on private land, or are homeless.

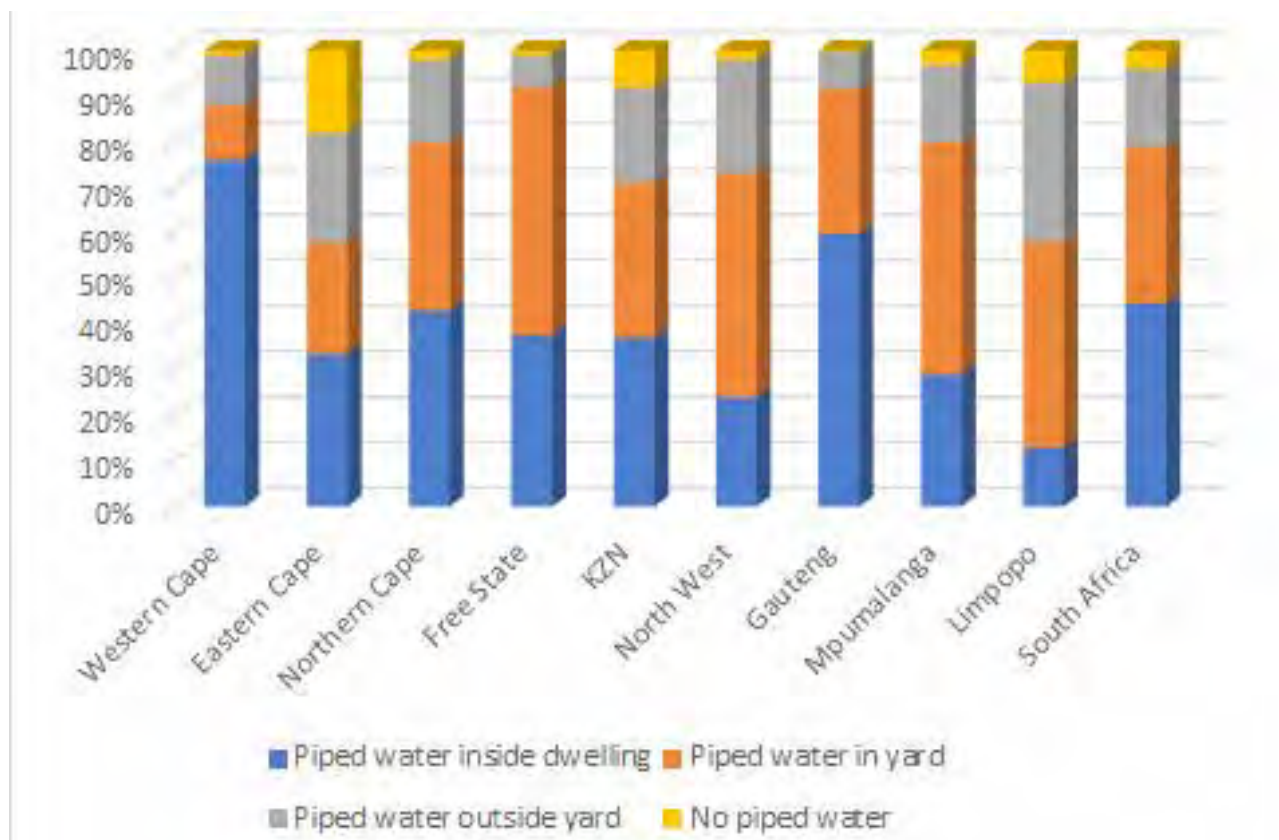


Figure 1: Percentage of households per province with different access to water (StatsSA 2016)

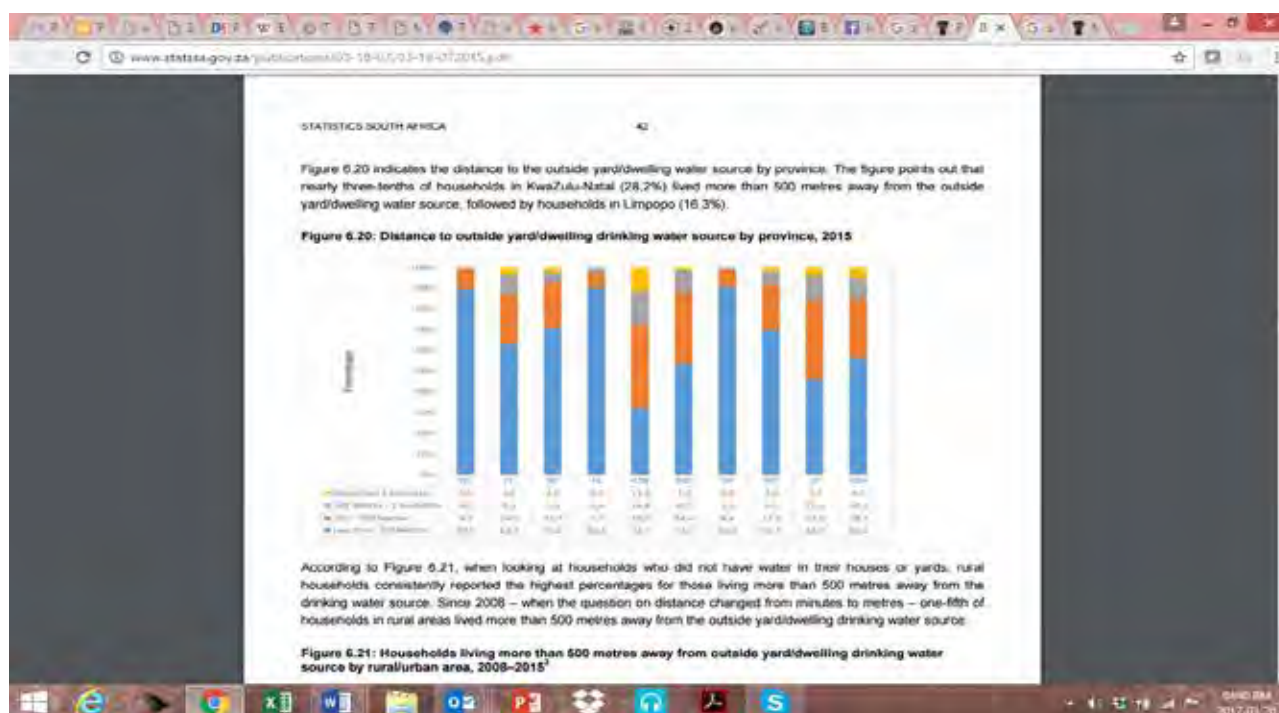


Figure 2: Percentage of households and distance from water source by province

Figure 2 indicates the percentage of households, per province, at different distances from a water source. Bearing in mind that the standard for provision of water services is 6 kilolitres per month **within 200 metres** of the household, this figure reveals that only the blue indicates households that are being provided within government standards – around 50% nationally. This challenge is particularly present in the rural areas where households are often scattered at some distance from each other.

The amount of water collected households is largely determined by how far the source of water is from the home. At more than 1 kilometre, often only about 5 litres per capita is collected, well below the South African interpretation of the right to water as being 25 litres per person per day. In this situation, hygiene and basic consumption are compromised. Under 1 km, the figure may move up to 20 litres per person per day, still resulting in health and hygiene challenges.

In 2015, of the 12,5 million households receiving water, 4,6 million had access to free basic water while about 3,3 million consumer units received free basic sewerage and sanitation services out of a total of 10,9 households.

However, this begs the question on the sufficiency of the free basic water amount, set at 25 litres per person per day in South Africa. Access generally refers to water needed to meet domestic needs for basic hygiene, drinking, and cooking. However, these figures do not consider the water needs of the poor with respect to income generation or small scale agriculture to meet their human right to food. The question increasingly raised is the extent to which the provision of water for domestic purposes is sufficient to meet the needs of poor communities both to meet the human right to food and nutrition, and to move out of poverty.

Access to a minimum standard of sanitation services—flush toilets connected to a public sewerage system or a septic tank, or a pit toilet with a ventilation pipe – increased from 62.3% in 2002 to 80% in 2015. Sanitation delivery is highest in the Western Cape where 93.3% of households had access to adequate sanitation, followed by Gauteng with 91%. Limpopo recorded the lowest rate of access to adequate sanitation services, at 53.8%. According to StatsSA, the number of consumer units receiving sewerage and sanitation services increased nationally, from 9,2 million in 2010 to 10,4 million in 2014.

Despite a policy position in 2008 to eradicate bucket toilets, in June 2015 Stats SA said that 80,119 households still had bucket toilets, and that the number had increased slight in the Free State instead of reducing. The Free State had the highest number of bucket toilets at 32,551, followed by the Eastern Cape with 28,757 bucket toilets. Nationally 179 134 households still had bucket toilets.

In 2013 Cabinet approved a policy position that free basic services, including water, should only be provided to indigent households. However, this policy position poses implementation challenges for municipalities in terms of determining accurately which households are indigent. Global experience shows that often the poorest households are the ones that fail to register on indigent registers and thus do not receive free services. In addition, where a number of households are living in one yard, the provision of 6 000 litres per yard, which is the standard approach, means that each household gets less than their basic amount of 25 litres per person. Durban has developed an approach to handling this which involves investigating how many households are resident in one yard, and adjusting the amount of free basic water provided accordingly.

Furthermore, in South Africa, the poorest of the poor are not yet receiving Free Basic Water because of the lack of access to functional water services infrastructure in informal settlements and rural areas in particular, and the delivery of infrastructure and services to the still unserved is necessary to ensure that all indigent households do, in fact, receive access to free basic water.

People living with disabilities are also, in many cases, unserved, since the basic water and sanitation standards do not take into account the needs of people with disabilities and are, therefore, in many cases, not accessible to them. It is worth noting that the Department of Water and Sanitation has revised their minimum norms and standards for water and sanitation under the Water Services Act to include the issue of services for people with disabilities, but these norms and standards have not yet been approved by the Minister or implemented.

Special efforts (equity measures) are needed to ensure equality in access to water and sanitation services and to address the needs of the poorest and most marginalised groups in society.

2.3. Rescuing failing municipal systems

Despite the gains in water services and sanitation delivery since 1994, there are regular media reports of interrupted water supply and dysfunctional sanitation systems, and a high proportion of service delivery protests are around water services issues.

DWS produces annual regulatory reports on the state of the water services sector through the Blue Drop and Green Drop reports. The most recent of these reports dates from 2014. The results of these show some deterioration in the provision of drinking water, while the state of waste water treatment works continues to deteriorate, resulting in ongoing water pollution with associated health risks. The reports indicate an enormous gap in standards between the top performing metros, and rural, small and medium sized municipalities that underperform to an extent that their systems pose a risk to human health and the environment.

One of the ongoing challenges is in relation to operation and maintenance, with some municipalities not having dedicated budgets or proper plans for this.

The 2014 Green Drop Progress Report provides information on the performance of wastewater treatment works. Most plants are in the high risk category while the number of plants in the low risk category has decreased. The number of critical risk plants grew from 121 to 212 plants.

Water services planning is poor in many municipalities, and is not linked to monitoring and evaluation systems. In addition, there is a wide spread failure to analyse the full cost of delivering water services at municipal level, with the result that tariffs do not accurately reflect the actual cost of supplying water.

There are major infrastructure challenges in the sector, not least the significant level of investment required for new water services infrastructure, and for the replacement or refurbishment of existing infrastructure over the next 10 years, estimated by the Department of Water and Sanitation as being in the region of R70 billion per annum for 10 years.

These challenges have coincided with an increase in civil society protests, most of which are directed at municipalities. An initiative which monitors grassroots ferment found that grievances against water and sanitation management feature consistently amongst the top five reasons why protests occur (PARI, 2015).

In addition, very high levels of non-revenue-water persist in South Africa. This includes both physical water lost through leakages in the system and water that is not paid for. This has significant impacts on water availability, including during droughts, but more critically, it has important implications for the financial viability of water services at the municipal level.

According to the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), there are a number of critical areas requiring intervention to improve the capacity of local government to deliver sustainable and equitable water supply and sanitation services. These include investment in training in management,

leadership, technical, financial, procurement, tariff structuring and other skills for civil servants (DCOG, 2009). However, capacity building programmes have, to date, largely focused on short term training, with limited results (DCOG, 2009). There is considerable scope for improved capacity development programmes for municipalities, and for partnerships between the private sector, non-profit role-players and state agencies domestically and abroad to undertake such capacity development work. A minimum number of participants from the disability sector should be required in all training interventions.

The legislative and institutional arrangements in the water services sector present challenges in terms of effective reporting and accountability for services delivery, not least a lack of clarity in terms of the roles of DWS and COGTA in monitoring and responding to water services delivery progress at municipal level. The current revision of the water legislation being undertaken by DWS presents an opportunity for clarifying the critical role that DWS, as the department with the technical water services expertise, must play in ensuring effective water services delivery by municipalities.

Skills Gaps in Local Government

Considerable institutional memory has been lost over the past 20 years in the water services sector. The South African Institute of Civil Engineering (SAICE) 'Report Card' states that the lack of sufficient skilled personnel in the water services and sanitation sectors is contributing significantly to municipal failures. Municipalities have significant infrastructure asset value, but they don't have the necessary skilled capacity to manage and maintain these assets. According to the Annual Report on Water Services in South Africa, only 51% of staff members in municipal water and sanitation positions have the requisite technical skills to ensure efficient and sustainable operations and only 49% of municipal water and sanitation positions in municipalities have been filled (SALGA, 2015).

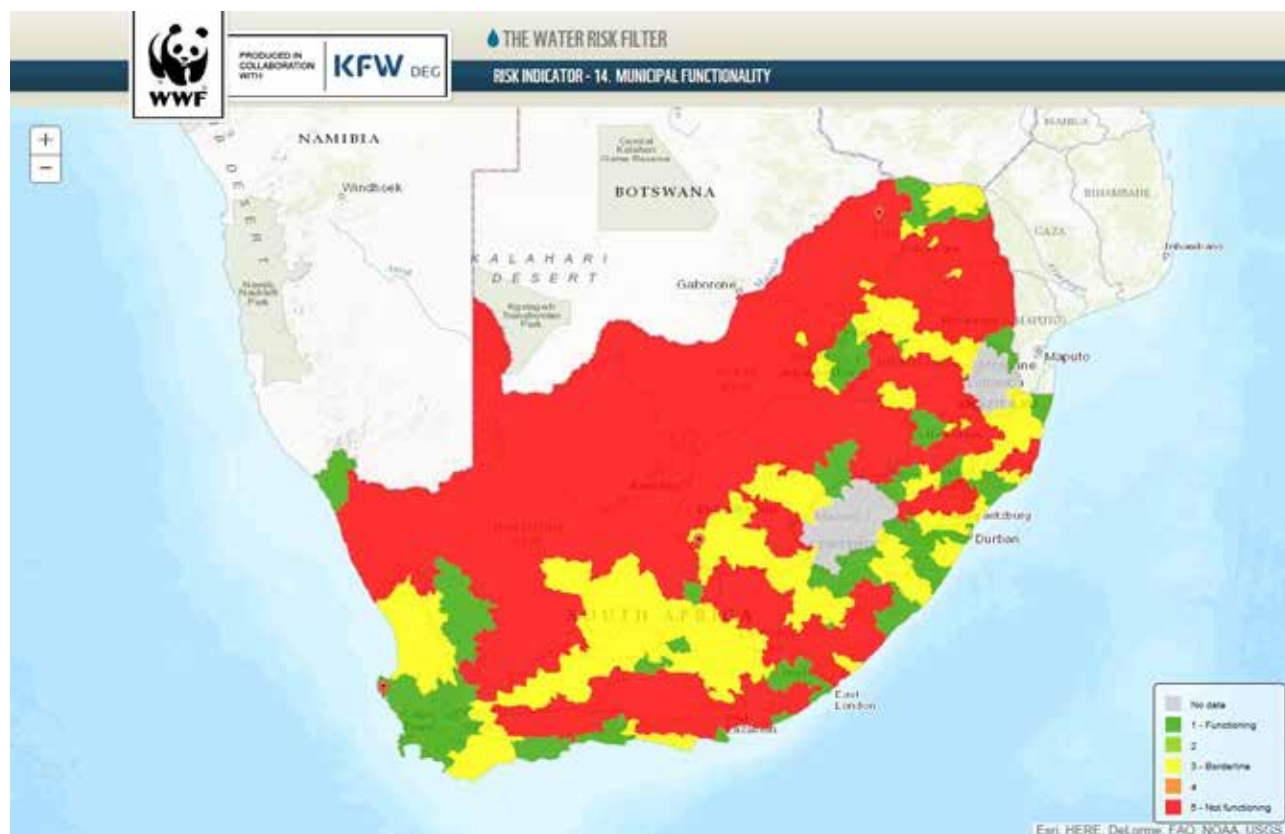


Figure 3: Levels of functional governance in local municipalities in South Africa (www.waterriskfilter.panda.org - Source data, COGTA, 2013).

To complicate matters, South Africa has a total of 15,000 engineers, which equates to one engineer servicing approximately 2,666 people, well below international best practice where one engineer services 40 people (ECSA, 2015). This shows the chronic shortage of municipal engineers in South Africa. Inadequate staffing is not simply due to lack of available skills. Unemployed recently graduated engineers are available but they are struggling to gain employment within local government structures.

According to the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), skills challenges in local authorities are on-going, with SALGA identifying a number of critical areas requiring intervention. These include an under-investment in management, leadership and technical skills for civil servants and an under-estimation of what it takes to acquire requisite specialist skills (DCOGTA, 2009). Though municipal regulations require general competency levels for senior managers and select officials, municipalities tend to ignore them and thus do not have the required skills for optimal service delivery results (National Treasury, 2011). Furthermore, capacity building programmes have, to date, focused on short term training, with limited results (DCOGTA, 2009).

2.1.1 Financial issues

Beyond municipalities' own funding sources, the two most significant grants they receive are the Equitable Share, which is intended to cover the costs of providing basic services to poor households; and the Municipal Infrastructure Grant, or MIG, which is intended to cover the capital costs of providing infrastructure for basic services for poor households. MIG funds enable the rapid development of infrastructure, but also incentivise rapid spending and opportunistic interventions, rather than sustainable outcomes. These grants reduce considerations of cost-effectiveness and life-cycle costing, and sustainability requirements are not necessarily given the importance that they should have. There is some evidence that the MIG programme is funding the construction of water services infrastructure in many areas which is not financially viable in the long-term, and which requires operating and managerial skills that might not exist. There is little evidence that increased funding solves the current problems without effective municipal planning, technical and financial management systems and greater public accountability.

The issue of financial sustainability at municipal level is complicated by poor asset management in many municipalities. As a result, municipalities do not have sufficient information on the financial requirements for maintaining and refurbishing their water services infrastructure, leading to further degradation.

2.1.2 Regulation and intervention

One of the current challenges is that despite the Minister of Water and Sanitation being held to some extent accountable for failures of water services provision, she has no authority to intervene directly in failing municipalities. Action has to be taken through provincial MEC's and departments of COGTA, despite the fact that they don't have the technical capability required to intervene in water services and sanitation provision. Currently the Water Services Act is facing amendment, and one option is to amend it to ensure that the Minister has stronger powers to intervene where the failure of municipal water services and sanitation is threatening the human rights, health and well-being of their residents.

2.1.3 Corruption and rent-seeking behaviour

Apart from the lack of technical and financial capacity to deliver and maintain the required services, lack of financial control systems and lack of political stability, one of the biggest challenges facing the South African public sector, and particularly municipalities, is corruption and maladministration¹

¹ Thornhill, C., 2006, 'Effective municipal government and administration as preconditions for efficient service delivery', Journal of Public Administration, Conference proceedings September, 317–332.

This corruption generally takes place in relation to the procurement of goods and services, through, for example, inflation of prices, contracts being awarded to friends or family, tenders that are not advertised, bid committees that are not properly constituted or from panel members not declaring their interest before taking part in adjudication committees.

2.4. Managing raw water quality

South Africa is facing a significant raw water quality challenge which in turn impacts on the quality of potable water and the treatment requirements. This deterioration in water quality has both developmental and economic impacts, and it threatens human health and livelihoods where people are exposed to poor water quality for consumptive or domestic usage. This impacts particularly on poor communities that are still dependent on water directly from ground and surface water for their water for consumption.

A number of small holder farmers and their workers in Steel Valley, near ArcelorMittal South Africa (Amsa) (previously Iscor) were severely affected by pollution of the groundwater in the valley. Samson Mokoena, a farmer in the valley, said: "People were sick with cancer, some had kidney failure. People lost their livelihoods, animals were deformed and died, crops didn't grow properly." Groundwater chemistry results showed elevated concentrations of calcium, magnesium, sulphate, chlorine, potassium, sodium, nitrate, fluorine, iron and manganese as well as high levels of cadmium which is especially harmful to kidneys. It took a 12-year struggle for the community to get the information on the level of pollution from the company.

2.5. Addressing corruption and rent-seeking

South Africa has severe challenges in water security, not only due to being a country with limited water resources, but also due to the impacts of climate change on water availability, and a growing demand for water across the country. There are different aspects to water security that impact on the working class. There is water security at the macro level – for example, ensuring that there is sufficient water to provide for the water needs of the economic heartland of the country, in the face of growing demand, and particularly during drought. At the other end of the scale there is the issue of water security for small scale water users whose enterprises, whether as small scale farmers, for example, or small business owners, including in the informal sector, are put at risk through interrupted water supply, either due to municipal failure or drought. Climate change, unfortunately, is likely to increase the intensity of droughts across the country, exacerbating this risk.

In recent months, there have been serious questions raised about the process for the appointment of contractors for the construction of Phase 2 of the Lesotho Highlands Water Scheme, intended to provide water to meet the growing demands of Gauteng. As a result of interference in the tender process, the construction of Phase 2 is running behind schedule, putting the water security of Gauteng at risk.

The issue of corruption and rent-seeking behaviour, whether at the municipal level or nationally, must be addressed with a great deal of effort to ensure that it does not impact negatively on the right to water of the working class, or the ability of the country to create sustainable jobs.

Key policy issues

3.1. Addressing inequity in access to water

- An integrated land, water and agrarian reform programme is necessary to achieve sustainable redress in land and water and to assist in developing the rural areas
- A champion department for water infrastructure for small-scale water users in rural areas with an allocated budget and a programme of infrastructural support developed and implemented would assist in addressing under-development in the rural areas and particularly the ex-homelands

3.2. Serving the poorest and most marginalised

- Consideration should be given as to whether 25 litres per person per day is sufficient for the basic human needs amount or whether it should be raised to 50 litres, or even to 100 litres to enable people to use water to achieve their right to food;
- Special efforts are needed to ensure the provision of services to the unserved, including the eradication of bucket toilets, and the provision of services to the homeless, and to people in informal settlements and on private land;

3.3. Rescuing failing municipal systems

- Professionalising the water services management functions at municipal level will assist in turning around the current failure of services;
- Municipal water services managers and politicians should be held accountable for failures in services delivery, particularly where human rights are violated
- The current system of grants to municipalities needs revision to incentivise the delivery of sustainable services

3.4. Ensuring access to sanitation for all

- Municipal water services managers must be held accountable for the eradication of bucket toilets within a limited period
- Minimum standards for toilets provided should be such that they are all accessible to people with disabilities

3.5. Managing water quality

- Effective compliance and enforcement is required to control water pollution in the country

3.6. Dealing with corruption

- Corruption in the water sector must be addressed stringently at all levels



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Mobilise People's Power to
Transform the Financial Sector
and build the People's Economy



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Transformation of the Media

It's time for a change

Introduction

After 22 years of democratic transition, South Africa is belatedly edging towards a fully digitised communications era. Without decisive and speedy intervention, this era threatens to be characterised by the same massive and fundamental inequality of access and participation of communications in the last 22 years – and, indeed, of the communications sector during much of the apartheid era.

Concentration of ownership and control of the means of intellectual production is, in fact, higher today than it was in dying days of apartheid. Existing policies and the manner of our digitisation is ensuring that this trend will accelerate.

In place of the choice of perspective envisioned in the 1991 ANC Media Charter giving all South Africans access to the range of ideas, information and interpretation necessary to enable them to make informed choices about their participation in society, the media today offers us but one choice of perspective – even if it does so in hundreds of different formats.

Reversing this trend, and liberating our media from the sole objective of profit maximisation, will take time and a concerted and sustained effort by all progressive forces in our society.

To launch this process, the SACP has co-focused its Red October Campaign in 2015-2016 on transforming the media, under the slogan Free the Media! It also gathered its own media activists and a range of individual media figures and representatives of independent media formations to convene a conference, held in 2015 to discuss the detailed objectives and mechanisms of a process of transforming the media.

Our intention was to produce a concrete programme that will ultimately achieve the conditions necessary for a diverse, dynamic and vibrant media, collectively reflecting the full range of perspectives and views held by South Africans – and giving South Africans, for the first time, access to real intellectual and content choices. The idea is magnificently summarised by the words of China's Mao Zedong: "Let a hundred flowers blossom, let a hundred schools of thought contend".

This document reflects the SACP's views on the media and on the way forward as its contribution to the Media Transformation Conference (2015).

It is significant that many of our positions are not new. They draw on the rich history of analysis and proposals our liberation movement, our democratic government and our country have produced in the last quarter-century on how best to create an enabling environment for a vibrant, dynamic media able fully to serve the people of our country. In developing our positions, the SACP has found and made use of several generations of documents largely forgotten or ignored by South Africa's media and by its decision-makers – from the Media Charter, written in 1991, incorporated into the ANC's first elections manifesto, Ready to Govern (and ignored thereafter); to the report, released in March 2015, of the

Ministerial ICT Policy Review Panel under Cde Joe Mjwara – and in particular its useful and thoughtful findings and recommendations on broadcasting and regulation, which seem to have fallen through the cracks created by the 2014 division of the Department of Communications into two.

We must learn from this history: it is not because of a lack of ideas on how to do it better that our media is in its current critical condition. It is because we, as a country and as a ruling alliance, have failed to turn those ideas into practical instruments of change. We have, instead, left it to the commercial market to decide what should be done and how – despite the overwhelming evidence that the market alone is simply not up to the task. To leave it to its own devices today, as we have done in the past, is to invite yet another market failure. More than 25 years ago, the Media Charter recognised this:

“The ANC asserts that mere declarations of media freedoms on their own are not enough. These freedoms must be underpinned by an equitable distribution of media resources, development programmes and a deliberate effort to engender a culture of open debate. This requires policies of affirmative action to redress the inequalities in our society.”

Overview

The quality of content in South Africa’s media continues in sharp decline. There are many reasons for this – tighter and tighter concentration of ownership; deskilling and sustained staff-cutting to achieve short-term profit maximisation; an obsessive resistance to providing content targeting the mass market (South Africa’s poor and working class majority). Most can reasonably be described as ill-conceived management decisions that damage any prospects of sustainable operation, thus perpetuating the media’s content crisis – and its struggle to maintain the audience figures they need to sustain operations and satisfy the voracious appetites of their shareholders.

The approach adopted in the most substantial democratic-era intervention in the media – opening the broadcast frequencies to private operators – has ensured that, with few, exceptions, radio has done little more than replicate the hegemonic perspectives of traditional print platforms. Likewise with the explosion of web-based media – non-hegemonic voices remain on the periphery.

The consequence has been a unipolar media perspective and an increasingly inadequately informed South African public, forced to rely on rumour, gossip and social media, in response to increasingly unreliable information, analysis and interpretation from the formal media, both digital and traditional. The extent of this unreliability was graphically demonstrated in April 2015 when News24, publishers of nearly half the daily newspapers sold in South Africa and of the biggest “news” website, argued in the South Gauteng High Court that it could – and did – legitimately copy stories from rival media, without even a cursory check on the accuracy of the content. Our biggest publisher thus acknowledged that it routinely publishes material without knowing if it is true, partly true or complete fabrication.

At the same time, the steady reduction in the editorial resources behind print, radio and television stories, and those of their digital, web-based equivalents, has crudified media coverage of politics and economics in South Africa into a daily good guy-bad guy soap opera.

The unipolar perspective the media offers today is a far cry from the pre-1994 position adopted by our Alliance in the Media Charter:

“The ANC believes that ... democracy in South Africa entails a movement from a closed society into one based on a free flow of information and a culture of open debate. At the core of democracy lies

the recognition of the right of all citizens to take part in society's decision-making process. This requires that individuals are armed with the necessary information and have access to the contesting options they require to make informed choices. An ignorant society cannot be democratic."

With this as a foundation, the SACP identified two key focal points for the Media Transformation Conference it convened in 2015 and the broader initiative to transform our media:

- Diversifying the range of our media voices, through decisive action to break down the massive monopolies dominating information generation and distribution on all media platforms, and what the Media Charter refers to as "affirmative action" to achieve "equitable distribution of media resources, development programmes and a deliberate effort to engender a culture of open debate". This will add new media voices to the sector, able to report on the world from other perspectives than that currently offered by South Africa's largely homogeneous media; and
- Raising the standard of accuracy, reliability and credibility of the content offered by South Africa's media through a combination incentives and sanctions to motivate allocation of greater resources to the production and distribution of more reliable, accurate and credible information.

What is essential, however, is not the development of good ideas – South Africa has those in abundance, languishing in forgotten files in dusty offices. What is essential is that, as South Africans, we follow through, ensuring that we achieve a diverse, dynamic and sustainable media, able to "arm" South Africans with the "necessary information ... and the contesting options" they need to make informed choices.

Towards a diverse media

The proposition that South Africa has overly-concentrated media ownership, and that this has negative economic and political consequences, is not simply an opinion of opponents of the current media arrangement in our country. The only transnational study of the extent and impact of media concentration, undertaken through the USA's Columbia Business School's Institute for Tele-Information, provides an empirical answer.

South Africa is one of the most concentrated media markets in the world according to the study into media concentration in 30 countries, including South Africa. The study is led by Professor of Finance and Economics, Eli Noam. His book on the subject has yet to be published, but in a presentation to the American Antitrust Institute in June 2012 he noted that the study covers a range of different media industries including content media (newspapers, magazines, books and audio-visual media), platform media (telecommunications and cable and satellite multi-channel platforms) and Internet media (ISPs, search engines and online news media).

Media concentration, he noted, is high in all the countries studied, and from very preliminary findings is associated with "less democracy and freedom, less effective regulation . . . (and) lower digital access". The study uses the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI) to measure the size of firms in relation to the industry to indicate the level of competition. This concept is widely used in competition law. Increases in the index indicate a decrease in competition and an increase in market power. According to Investopedia, the US Department of Justice considers a market with a score of less than 1 000 to be a competitive market. The closer the score is to 10 000 (the highest level on the index), the less competitive it is.

The presentation given by Noam at the 2012 conference indicates that all countries studied had all media HHI scores of over 1 000. **In 2008/2009 South Africa had the highest level of concentration**

when considering all media (ie content, platforms and internet), with the highest global score of more than 6 000. It is followed by Egypt as the next highest concentrated media market (in 2004/2005 Egypt had a higher index than South Africa but the positions were reversed by 2008/2009).

Judged purely by content production sectors, South Africa ranks third highest concentrated media market (following China and Egypt).

Noam also noted that the study checked these figures by assessing not only the HHI scores of countries, but by counting “the voices”. A company with more than 1% of its media market is defined as “a voice” – and even if the company cross owns media outlets in several media industries it is still counted as one voice. Even though it fairs slightly better in terms of this analysis, South Africa is still one of the top ten countries with the lowest number of voices (with the sixth lowest number of voices).

Noam’s conclusions are difficult to fault: South Africa’s levels of media concentration clearly have a negative effect on “democracy and freedom ... effective regulation (and) ... digital access”.

As the Media Charter recognised in 1991, South Africa needs a greater variety of media voices, rather than attempting to compel the existing “voices” to reflect the diversity of South African opinion. Of arguably more immediate concern is the presence of Naspers as super-monopoly in South Africa’s media sector, with its roots reaching back more than a century, into the heart of the organisation that gave birth to apartheid, the Afrikaner Broederbond.

More than two decades after the 1994 democratic breakthrough, Naspers continues to control nearly half the daily newspapers sold to South Africans; two thirds of the weekly newspapers and magazines read by South Africans; the country’s biggest internet service provider and information websites; more than 99% of pay-television programming watched by South Africans; and (if legal documents currently before the Competition Tribunal are accurate) has effectively assumed control of our country’s public broadcaster, the SABC.

And it has achieved this not by the excellence of its content, but as a consequence of the massive advantage given to it under apartheid, and of post-1994 policy and regulatory decisions.

More broadly, all the daily newspapers read in South Africa, well over 90% of the weekly papers and more than three quarters of the magazines and websites are owned and controlled by four media houses, two of which have significant overlaps into control of the radio stations available to South Africans.

This is unhealthy. But, for a society still trying to reconstruct itself as an equitable participatory democracy, the implications of a circumstance in which the content of the print media (digital and hard copy), audio services (traditional broadcast and web-based) and video services (ditto) is generated in environments geared towards, and rewarding, profit-maximisation rather than quality and excellence, are of serious concern.

Two distinct initiatives are necessary to address this circumstance (significantly more extreme today than in 1994), both used fairly commonly throughout the world to address media sector and economic distortions: **de-monopolisation** and **diversification**.

De-monopolisation

South Africa has two groupings of statutes and common-law precedent to prevent the development of economic monopolies generally, and to ensure diversity among licensed (mainly broadcasting) operators – a sufficient arsenal, at least in theory, to keep monopolies at bay. The first is overseen by the Competition Commission and the Competition Tribunal; the second by the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (Icasa).

While there is compelling circumstantial evidence of some level “corporate capture” in both forums, the impact of Noam’s “less effective regulation” in monopoly media ownership conditions is most striking in Icasa.

In 2005, Icasa adopted a policy on satellite television broadcasting in terms of which statutory cross-media ownership restrictions did not apply to satellite-TV broadcasters. Cross-media ownership restrictions exist precisely to prevent excessive influence in two traditional media sectors (print and radio, print and TV, TV and radio) of an individual “voice”. The logic is both political and economic, and until recently was rigorously enforced with respect to non-satellite-based operations. The result has been the explosive growth of MultiChoice, Naspers’ pay-TV subsidiary.

Icasa’s decision has allowed a media house launched by the Broederbond – and which was the only media house to refuse to appear before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission – to dominate both traditional print and television sectors of South Africa’s media. More recently it has expanded its dominance to encompass the South African internet market (while at the same time arguing in court it had no obligation to verify the accuracy of its platform’s content).

Perhaps by coincidence, the policy instrument was signed for Icasa by a man who left the Icasa council a month later and, two years later, joined the board of MultiChoice.

What we seek are common commitments to:

- Reverse the Icasa policy on cross-media ownership, if necessary by amendment to its governing statutes, to enforce the break-up of the Naspers colossus – in much the same way as the US government forced the break-up of the telephony conglomerate, Bell;
- Prohibit simultaneous ownership of satellite and terrestrial television operations – either completely, or with a cap on audience share on one or both sectors;
- Expand the cross-media restrictions to recognise the role and influence of web-based, digital media;
- A more rigorous public oversight on Icasa.

These are the minimum actions the SACP believes are necessary to address the current ownership concentrations of ownership in South Africa’s media.

With respect to all media, the SACP recognises the Media Charter provides direction: “Ownership of media resources, production facilities and distribution outlets shall be subject to anti-monopoly, anti-trust and merger legislation.”

It is still necessary to review existing “anti-monopoly, anti-trust and merger legislation” and to develop proposals for submission to the government for such amendments to legislation as are necessary to ensure diversity of perspectives envisaged by the Media Charter are achieved.

Diversification objectives and mechanisms

The SACP’s approach to diversifying South Africa’s media recognises that diversity of ownership is not an end in itself, but a means to an end – the ultimate objective being to ensure, in the words of the Media Charter, that all South Africans are “armed with the necessary information and have access to the contesting options they require to make informed choices”, through provision of a diversity of perspectives – of a **diversity of content**. We do not consider the occasional appearance of communist writers in the opinion sections of staunchly pro-capitalist media “diversity”. Rather the concept of diversification refers to the availability of media informed by a world view that differs from the hegemonic perspective in the current media – that recognises that the choice of stories that interest readers differs according to the class of the target audience, as does the angle taken in reporting events and processes.

Nor is the race of the reader (or the editorial decision-maker) of primary importance. Post-1994 “diversification” initiatives have tended to assume that shareholding by black South Africans will somehow translate into a growth in black audiences.

Yet there are concrete examples of individuals and trade union investment vehicles securing significant shareholding in media houses and having their nominated directors paying attention exclusively to the bottom line and dividend flow. Content has not shifted perspective to align with the communities on whose behalf the individuals and trade unions notionally secured the shares. South African media content very rarely addresses the issues and concerns of most South Africans, the majority of whom live in urban and rural townships and villages.

A similar position holds with editorial appointments of black people – three of South Africa’s four major business titles have, or have had, black editors. Whatever the personal impact, the titles have continued to serve a commercial and economic elite, often against the interests of the majority of working class and poor black South Africans.

Here it may be useful to point out despite the staggering growth of Zulu-language newspaper readership (and their web-based digital content), the South African mainstream media retains a knee-jerk antagonism to publishing in languages other than English or Afrikaans (Independent Newspapers under its new owners is a partial exception). Readership of their newspapers is thus in depressingly consistent decline.

To be “armed with the necessary information and have access to the contesting options they require to make informed choices” means, for most South Africans, having access to media in their mother-tongue.

Diversity thus includes dramatically expanding the language base of our media.

The SACP’s approach also recognises that current forms of media ownership contribute to the concentration of ownership and thus to the lack of diversity.

While all existing print titles are owned and controlled through conventional corporate mechanisms, our broadcasting system entrenches commercial, profit-maximising forms of ownership by setting up three tiers of ownership:

- Public (the SABC),
- Commercial (all privately-held regional or national radio and television licences), and
- Community (low frequency, small footprint, local stations, theoretically but seldom in practice controlled by the communities they serve).

In a country in which the vast majority of citizens do not possess the means to participate meaningfully in commercial ownership structures, and thus to exercise any influence on content, intended audience and so on, this has had the effect of turning privately held radio and television licenses into money-making ventures, rather than (as the Icasa Act requires) being regulated “in the public interest”.

The poor, working class and un- or underemployed majority in South Africa is left in the margins, with some (often unsustainable) “community” services.

The SACP therefore holds the view that a major revamp of the broadcasting system is urgently required, with a collective ownership tier added to include co-operative ownership (by staff, by audiences and so on) – and an enforceable affirmative action policy introduced to bind Icasa to achieve a reasonable level of parity between commercial and collective ownership of the operations it licences.

More broadly, in the traditional print and emerging digital sectors – for both content production and distribution – the SACP takes the view that support for new entrants able to offer new perspectives not currently available to South African audiences is necessary, in the form referred to in the Media Charter, and specifically the commitment to its statement that “affirmative action will be implemented to provide financial, technical and other resources to those sectors of society deprived of such means”. The Comtask (Task Group on Government Communications) in the late 1990s began work on this, followed up by a comprehensive report by the Government Communications and Information System (GCIS), both now forgotten and gathering dust.

The administration in office at the time took that view that such support would require a partnership with existing media operators, introducing a voluntary system, and establishing the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA). In negotiations ahead of its establishment, media proprietors won the right to effectively veto any grants by the agency, and to have the commanding heights of the media (national and regional operations, and distributive operations) entirely excluded from its remit. While the agency battled gamely to support new and emerging media, it was restricted, in the words of a former executive manager, to “funding cottage industries”.

It is still necessary to pursue active work to have the MDDA transformed or entirely replaced by an independent agency (if necessary with the character of a Chapter 9 institution) with a clear and explicit mandate to achieve content diversity in all sectors of the South African media, including:

- **Diversity of language**
- **Diversity of perspective and**
- **Diversity of forms of ownership.**

The review of the MDDA Act, related statutes and proposals made prior to its founding regarding the diversification of South Africa's media remains necessary.

The SACP offers to provide administrative support for the working group.

The primary and overriding objective of the SACP is that of building and strengthening media platforms that advance and reflect the perspectives and interests of the workers and the poor, the majority in our country.

Accountability

As a party committed to the principles and values enshrined in the Media Charter and the Freedom Charter, the SACP notes the Media Charter's commitment to "basic rights and freedoms":

"The basic principle around which our Media Charter should revolve is maximum openness within the context of a democratic constitution and Bill of Rights. Thus, for instance, it would be erroneous to advocate the setting up of bodies which determine what society should and should not read, hear or watch. Rather, judicial procedures should be effected if and when civil rights are threatened or violated. Media freedoms should be understood in the context of other citizens' rights such as the right to privacy and dignity."

Recent amendments to the mandate of the Film and Publication Board (FPB) may transform it into a body "which determine(s) what society should and should not read, hear or watch". However, the SACP supports the view set out in ICT Policy Review Panel documentation that the advent of the digital era requires that we review and amend all existing content regulatory structures and systems, dividing all future regulation of content into three primary streams: print, audio and visual, covering both digital and traditional media.

We further support the idea that all such regulatory structures should be independent – that is, like the structures controlling the behaviour of medical personnel and other professionals, they should be established by statute, but operated independently of both the government and of the sectors they regulate.

We are particularly concerned that the existing print and broadcasting self-regulatory bodies are, as voluntary membership bodies, powerless to enforce their rulings, and that any sanction handed down is damaging only to the pride of proprietors. We take the view that to serve as an enforcement mechanism, these bodies require the force of statute behind them.

Further, the proposed media appeals tribunal has the potential to make complaints against media platforms overly complex and cumbersome. Ideally such processes should be simple, accessible, affordable and relatively quick.

It is still necessary to pursue:

- A rapid and comprehensive review and overhaul of all existing and proposed media content regulatory systems and structures to achieve:
- A system covering all media content, including web-based and similar media content;
- A system established by statute, but with statutorily guaranteed independence, as envisaged in the Media Charter;

- A system to which adherence is either compulsory or which incorporates compelling incentives to join (and compelling disincentives for not doing so);
- The introduction of a fast-track, low-cost but courts-based anti-defamation process, enabled by statute, similar to that in operation in the UK and elsewhere; and
- Mechanisms to achieve these commitments in South Africa were required and to be identified still. The Congress should make its contribution.

South Africa's newsrooms – towards fact checking, not profit maximising

South Africa's newsrooms and its journalists and media workers have been under sustained siege for decades – beginning in the 1980s when, across the world financialisation began to infect media ownership.

In the name of “cost efficiencies” proprietors have juniorised and de-skilled newsrooms while requiring fewer journalists, with fewer skills and less experience, to produce more stories for their core employer – the hard copy editions (of newspapers), audio or audio-visual platforms – while simultaneously preparing content for websites (written, audio and audio-visual) and contributing to social media.

They have, in consequence, virtually no time to ensure that what they produce is accurate, credible or reliable. And they are particularly vulnerable to input from spin-doctors and other would-be influence peddlers.

In his book *Flat Earth News*, British journalist Nick Davies quantifies the vulnerability of journalists under the digital-era, profit-maximisation workload, and the consequent influence of spin-doctors with little interest in truth or accuracy, but much on influencing audience opinions. In some cases more than half the words in individual English newspaper editions originate from third-party sources (including advertisers, commercial lobbyists and political spin-doctors), but appear as the work of “independent” journalists.

Davies' conclusion on the partisan character of many British newspapers is: “There's no conspiracy here, it's just a mess.”

The situation is worsened by the absence of a national union in South Africa, primarily organising media workers responsible for production of editorial content.

With our ally, Cosatu, and trade unions operating in the sector, the SACP therefore intended to initiate a programme to bring together South African journalists and media workers to develop a common approach to working conditions, remuneration, rights and responsibilities, and to agree a process of ensuring its implementation across all media platforms. This includes employment equity, which is a serious issue that must be addressed. Like ownership, employment equity must be seen as a means to an end rather than an end in itself. It must translate into progressive and diverse content.

The role of the public broadcaster

The SABC has a unique position in the South African media, both because it is state-owned, has the largest combined audience of any media house, and has a markedly different mandate.

Its audience stems from its two dozen radio stations, broadcasting in all official languages, and most “recognised” languages.

Its mandate is to provide, from a non-partisan perspective encompassing all South Africans, a comprehensive record on significant events and developments domestically, regionally and globally. It is generously funded to fulfil this mandate – through the “licence fee” (effectively a retrogressive, ring-fenced tax) and the right to run at least as much advertising per hour as commercial broadcasters, which, because of the size of its audiences, generates vast revenues.

Yet its audience numbers have been in decline for much of this century, its finances and governance are in perpetual crisis.

Oversight by parliament is poor, as is the supposedly arms-length administrative oversight by the Minister of Communications.

Its partnership with MultiChoice became the subject of litigation and it increasingly operated as an independent fiefdom, accountable only to itself.

Its budget allocation have moved, year-by-year since 2000, away from expenditure of content to support for an increasingly bloated bureaucratic stratum which does little other than perpetuate its own existence.

Remedying the problems and challenges of the SABC is a massive task.

While the SACP is sympathetic to the solution by the Greek government during the 2014 Eurozone crisis – it closed its public broadcaster for a fortnight – it believes the more prudent and realistic approach is to recognise:

- That millions of South Africans continue to rely on the SABC as their primary source of information and entertainment;
- The current and potential role of the SABC as a national unifier and common asset.

It therefore proposes a major review of the SABC’s governance structures and protocols, and development of proposals that will, if implemented ensure:

- Greater administrative accountability to parliament and to the executive;
- A more explicit and binding mandate, with sanctions imposed on executive and non-executive directors in the event of non-performance; and
- A delay on the provision of any state funding until the SABC has costed the fulfilment of its public service mandate as set out in law;
- A major, state-initiated review of its staffing and performance against mandate, and the removal of all executives responsible for non-performance.

Delegates to the SACP’s special national congress in July resolved to “reclaim and professionalise the SABC” and demanded the removal of “the illegally appointed so-called COO”.

Digital migration

The current broadcast digital migration policy, and particularly the use of a “dumb box” STB, has direct, negative implications on attainment of the SACP’s media transformation objectives. It will broaden the digital divide between the affluent South Africa and the resource-poor majority – creating, in the words of one writer, “a form of TV apartheid”.

The inability of the “dumb box” STB to adequately protect against signal piracy will prevent free-to-air broadcasters from acquiring high definition and other high-quality content – producers are increasingly reluctant to sell their content to broadcasters using insecure signal distribution networks.

The resulting declining audiences – and thus advertising revenues – will further starve free-to-air broadcasters of the resources they need to compete with MultiChoice’s satellite service, DStv, and its digital terrestrial service MNet – the TV arms of Naspers’ vast and influential media monopoly.

It is widely recognised that MultiChoice executives actively campaigned against an earlier policy that provided for “smart box” STB technology, which would have gone some way to levelling the playing field between free-to-air broadcasters and MultiChoice’s satellite and terrestrial operations. Equally importantly it would have significantly lowered the financial barriers to entry for potential pay-TV competitors to MNet and DStv.

Detailed local newspaper reports suggest MultiChoice effectively bought the political support of SABC executives and directors to back their campaign against that policy, along with that of South Africa’s tiny (and mis-named) “community television” sector, and of part of the leadership of the National Association of Manufacturers of Electronic Components (Namec).

The campaign ultimately succeeded in having the policy reversed, leaving MultiChoice, now in a bizarre, parasitic partnership with the SABC, virtually unchallenged in South Africa’s television sector. The process has been indicative of some of the crudest forms of “corporate capture”.

For the SACP, the consequent development of “TV apartheid” demands a sustained and broadly based initiative to ensure that television and its web-based audio-visual off-shoots are not denied to the majority of South Africans as one of the means of arming themselves with “the necessary information and ... access to the contesting options they require to make informed choices”.

Paying attention on digital migration remains important on the agenda of media transformation.

The damaging economic consequences for the South African electronics manufacturing sector of the “dumb box” policy have been set out in detail by the manufacturers’ chapter of the South African Communications Forum (SACF), Namec too, having recently rid itself of the two individuals who briefly took control to back MultiChoice, is strongly opposing the current policy.

The SACP has taken up the cudgels on behalf of the voiceless in this debate, South Africa’s working class, poor and unemployed majority.

The SACP seeks to achieve a programme of action to rollback the formal and irreversible introduction of “TV apartheid” in our country. The recent stance by the department of Communication to revert to the ANC, SACP-shared policy of encryption is crucial and must be supported and deepened. The recent Constitutional Court ruling on this matter did not prohibit this.



Strengthen the Vanguard Character of the SACP

CHAPTER 1

Towards a review of Party Organisation

1. Introduction and Preamble

- 1.1. The first draft of this discussion document was unveiled at the Augmented Central Committee in 2014. It was then amended and circulated thereafter to Party structures for internal discussion. This in preparation for the 3rd Special National Congress (July 2015) and the 14th National Congress (July 2017) in terms of the resolutions of the 13th National Congress (July 2012). This document remains incomplete. It will be refined to become a Party Policy Paper following the 3rd Special National Congress, as stated below.
- 1.2. Marxism-Leninism teaches us three fundamental aspects of its spheres in nature, society and thought, and that these are always in a continuous process of change. The organisational review process recognises this reality. It accepts change as constant, therefore as continuous and inevitable. The posterity of the SACP is assured with this kind of exercises which should be revisited frequently.
- 1.3. Political decay and ideological decadence necessitates radical changes in the way we approach social, economic and political matters as well as organisational life. While this holds true in general, what has necessitated this process in particular is succinctly captured above. There are a number of changes which have occurred not only in our broad National Liberation Movement but, in particular, the Liberation Alliance and the National Democratic Revolution (NDR), as well as in our society in general. Changes have an impact on the way we are organised and do things. Some of the changes that have occurred, however, were correctly called for by our Party.
- 1.4. This process of organisational review and reorganisation is therefore aimed at repositioning the Party to keep pace with the times and be responsive as effectively as possible to continuously changing conditions, both positive and negative. However, this process is, simultaneously, an opportunity to renew and wage a relentless struggle against our own weaknesses. Among others, through the review of Party organisation and the conduct of Party members at all levels including leadership levels. This includes mining the ground in our broad movement to respond to any political decay and ideological decadence. Therefore, this discussion is not just about the Party alone but our movement as a whole and society at large.
- 1.5. We are embarking on this far reaching programme in the context of the Centenary of the Great October Socialist Revolution (2017) and the Centenary of the SACP (2021). This review process should both celebrate these important milestones in the revolutionary working class struggles for socialism and the ultimate goal of communism and reposition the Party organisationally

for the advance to socialism. In the ultimate analysis, we must be seen to be strengthening preparations and the struggle for deepening the NDR towards its logical conclusion, that of, our next democratic breakthrough, laying the indispensable basis for our transition to socialism!

2. The organisational context of the review

- 2.1. Towards its 13th Congress the Party engaged in a series of debates. Through the Central Committee we processed discussion documents to prepare and develop the Party programme, the South African Road to Socialism (SARS).
- 2.2. Amongst the hotly debated issues were constitutional amendments which invariably began to reposition the Party, relevant to the new obtaining conditions of a Communist Party serving in governance – that is, in alliance with a progressive and militant trade union movement and a multi-class movement in, and leading, the government in a predominantly capitalist society. This further prompted the need to probe and discuss the relationship between the working class and state power, contributing to the well-known state power debate within the Party.
- 2.3. At the core of these debates were how to relate to both the state and state power in dealing with what is arguably one of the most intricate and complex revolutionary processes. The 12th Party Congress (2007) had resolved this matter by re-affirming that the state under capitalist production relations is contested. The Party, therefore, agreed to actively participate in the democratic state institutions and processes to contest all its trajectories in favour of the working class, and not leave this key site of power uncontested to bourgeois dominance. This was guided by the Medium Term Vision (MTV) of the Party following its 1st Special National Congress (2005).
- 2.4. In its assessment of the first decade of our transition to democracy, the Party concluded that the bourgeois had benefitted the most in economic terms. This despite the many major social advances and the rights that the overwhelming majority of the working class had achieved for the first time. In its collective wisdom, the Party arrived at the MTV, which declared that, if things are to change, going forward there must be no single centre of power in our society which must be allowed to exercise that power without the presence, input, influence and the impact of the working class. Characterising its leadership, the Party summed up its task in tilting the balance in favour of the working class, as that of building working class power and hegemony in all key sites of struggle and power: the overriding goal of this review process.
- 2.5. In order to carry out this task, the Party decided that its leaders must be released to serve in government based on continuous assessment and the need to strike a balance between all other key sites of in Party work, namely the state itself, the community, the economy, the workplace, the ideological terrain, the international terrain and the environment. The Party further agreed to create mechanisms for both their deployment and accountability, starting first with the establishment of the Deployment and Accountability Commission of the Central Committee. The functioning, workings and effectiveness of the Commission and lower levels Deployment and Accountability Committees need to be improved. As part of the organisational review process the Party must develop guidelines in this regard.
- 2.6. The 13th Party Congress took the work step further. Through SARS it re-organised Party Organisation by: endorsing Voting District-based branches; expanding the Secretariat at the National and Provincial levels requiring one member of the Secretariat to be full-time; flexibly enlarging the size of District Executive Committees; recognising the coordinating functions of Sub-Districts; paying special attention to Party building, adding it as a full chapter in the Party programme; and providing for initiatives to strengthen the Head Quarters and the entire Party Organisation. This re-affirmation of Party building as a critical political task was very important

and sought to bridge the gap of a mistaken separation between organisational development and political programme.

- 2.7. However, the process was not concluded, at least to the satisfaction of the 13th Party Congress. Therefore the 13th Party Congress mandated the Central Committee to complete this task and report to the 14th Party Congress. Accordingly, one of the critical discussion documents of our 14th Party Congress will be on Party Organisational Review and Reorganisation. In this context, the 3rd Special National Congress is called upon to consider this present document and enrich it for that purpose, including, through resolutions both for immediate implementation and, equally important, resolutions for further consideration and ratification by the 14th Party National Congress. The 14th Party Congress must finalise the work and complete this cycle of the process.
- 2.8. The entire Party organisation is therefore required to continue the discussion on Party Organisational Review and Reorganisation beyond the 3rd Special National Congress taking into account its outcomes. This work must take place and be strengthened at the branch, district and provincial levels. It must continue to involve complementarity between bottom-up and top-down co-ordination and discussion as led by the 13th Congress Central Committee.
- 2.9. This discussion document will be revised accordingly. The final Policy Position Paper, including where necessary constitutional amendments, must and will be finalised and adopted by the Central Committee for consideration by the 14th National Congress ahead of time. This in terms of the relevant provisions of the Party constitution.

3. The broader political context of the review

- 3.1. The imperialist offensive against its hegemony has heightened internationally. This offensive has become more aggressive here at home as elsewhere with overt and covert attacks directed at our National Liberation Movement, Alliance and its independent formations the SACP, ANC and COSATU, as well as associated autonomous structures. In particular, the SACP, the struggle for scientific socialism and communism, have been the most severely attacked, as the first target against the rest of our movement.
- 3.2. The rest of our movement and various sectors of its organisation are facing serious challenges. The leading organisational component of the movement, the ANC, as well as the Party, is affected in various ways either directly or indirectly if not both. The trade union, students, youth, women and civic organisations are facing serious internal problems of organisation, unity and cohesion. They have, in general, been weakened and are struggling to regain their footing. The causes of these problems include internally original dynamics and related contestations. But this not in isolation from the broader economic situation facing our country.
- 3.3. In particular, a significant part of the material basis of the problem lies in the economy, which is characterised by high levels of inequality, unemployment and poverty, but in which leadership positions in politics, proximity to the state and its links with business, including tenders, and politics-business and business connections, are seen as vehicles of upward mobility out of the bottom rungs of inequality, unemployment and poverty.
- 3.4. In the process, corruption has found its way and contaminates the DNA of many organisations, not least in our movement but as well as outside it. The impact of external forces in perpetuating the problems, manipulating the situation, exploiting it and deepening divisions for their own profit must not be neglected, undermined and underestimated.

- 3.5. To this end there have been visible class reconfigurations associated with degeneration in the character of liberation forces mainly driven by, as stated, economic and social changes.
- 3.6. It is absolutely critical, therefore, that the process of Party Organisational Review and Reorganisation is not seen to be in isolation from the overall struggle to contest the direction of our society and its reorganisation as a result of capitalist accumulation, restructuring and deepening attempts at corporate capture of our state. In particular, the state-class relations must not be left out of sight. The deepening attempts at corporate capture of the state and indeed even many organisations reflect an agenda, which in part is already entrenched and therefore accommodated in the tenderisation of the state, to embed the state even further in the capitalist class.
- 3.7. Post-1994, we also increasingly have a new-post liberation struggle generation. The statistical finding that unemployment mostly affects the youth means that this generation has a significant unemployment rate. In addition, it needs proper education, including political education and ideological training. Both energised and distressed, if not attended to, this generation could become vulnerable to negative mobilisations and driven astray.
- 3.8. All of these necessitate adaptation and therefore changes to meet the demands of the continuously changing situation. This discussion document may not sufficiently address our response to all these issues. It is critical therefore that our unfolding discussion fill the gap by the time of our 14th Party National Congress.
- 3.9. One overriding objective must also be considered. This Party Organisational Review and Reorganisation takes place in the context where our Liberation Alliance converges on the need to pursue the second, more radical phase of our transition. What type of the SACP and Alliance, as well as, therefore, the ANC and COSATU does the pursuit of the second, more radical phase of our transition require? This question must be answered sufficiently through this process of Party Organisational Review and Reorganisation.

4. Fundamental guiding pillars of the Party Organisational Review and Reorganisation process

- 4.1. Noting the inherent risk with any review process, the SACP organisational review process should be guided politically and ideologically and conform to basic Party principles and policies amongst which few are outlined below:
- 4.1.1. Commitment to the political programme of the Party and its strategic perspectives to deepen, defend and take responsibility for the NDR and build socialism in the context of our affirmation of Marxist-Leninist principles and guidelines.
 - 4.1.2. Unflinching commitment to our Revolutionary Alliance and its programme, the NDR, as a strategic posture and programme to drive, deepen, consolidate and advance the transformation of our society ultimately leading to the indispensable basis for ending all forms of exploitation.
 - 4.1.3. Re-affirmation of the Party principles, to mention just a few:
 - a) Accountability of members and Party control;
 - b) Democratic Centralism;
 - c) Collective Leadership;
 - d) Discipline and Self-Discipline;
 - e) Loyalty to the Party and the people's revolutionary cause.

Chapter 2

Towards a Framework of Party Building in a Continuously Changing Environment

5. Take a long range view, strengthen the Party, elevate the centrality of its constitution

- 5.1. The process of organisational review, and the necessity to strengthen the SACP as a vanguard Party for socialism, cannot be divorced from the tasks that the SACP has set for itself in our own Political Programme, SARS.
- 5.2. Party Organisational Review and Reorganisation must also be based on a thorough analysis of the challenges facing our revolution, and the specific role of the SACP, now and in the coming period.
- 5.3. Guided by our own programme, building the organisational capacity of the SACP must also not be narrowly seen in terms only of the SACP organisational structures, but also the role of the SACP in building the capacity of the working class in general thus expressing our vanguard role properly.
- 5.4. The capacity of the democratic developmental state we seek to build, capable of driving the goals of the NDR, a direct route to socialism, must, similarly, not be seen in isolation.
- 5.5. It is also important that the SACP in this process takes a long range view of the challenges ahead, at least in the next 20 years, and adopt clearly defined targets and milestones in the struggle to build a socialist South Africa. For instance what would constitute either strict targets or irreversibles in the context of the NDR and related societal mobilisation and how best to lock these targets or milestones towards their achievement?
- 5.6. We need to build the Party in a much popular and simple way. This will make it attractive to the workers, the youth, women and sectors of our society that are not easily attracted to the Party programmes, let alone to understand it.
- 5.7. The first task in Party building is political, with clearly articulated principles, policies and general guidelines as the basis to unite our Party, cohere members and enhance its unity of purpose. **The ideological training of members is the prerequisite of the political strength of the organisation and a critical requirement** to fulfil this task.
- 5.8. To develop and train members correctly, we need to **elevate the value of the Party constitution**. The constitution itself must espouse the prime values of the Party, its ideology, succinctly, and be the central point of orientation of Party members. It must not be seen mainly and even only by some as a mechanical operational framework document. Neither must it be seen as a document simply used to resolve disputes. The Party constitution must be more of a political and ideological document which guides members and the entire Party organisation. It must outline the expectations of Party from its members and outline their expected conduct as well.
- 5.9. The second primary task is adherence to implement the principle of Democratic Centralism as a pillar of Party building, unity and cohesion. We should therefore work to improve organisational systems and policies guiding Party operations and clarifying the process of accountability and control of members and leaders. Democratic Centralism should be utilised to deepen intra-Party democracy, coordination and guide Party members on the implementation of our programme.
- 5.10. To do this we consider consolidating some work already done on Party building in terms of new methods of work and summaries to simplify the tasks and set parameters as we make

organisational work exciting. The intention is that over time members can fully comprehend the basic tasks, pillars and the historic mission of the Party.

6. The main pillars of Party building

- 6.1. Follow the correct practice of Democratic Centralism, summarised below under 'The Four Subordinates of Party Building', under the following pillars.
 - a. Develop the working class ideology of Party members.
 - b. Unity of purpose and collective leadership.
 - c. Organisational discipline, individual discipline and self-discipline.
 - d. Constructive criticism and self-criticism as a critical method of constant improvement.
 - e. Follow the Party principles, uphold revolutionary morality and conduct.

7. The Four Critical Subordinates of Party Building:

- 7.1. In carrying out the task of building the organisation and the deepening Democratic Centralism. There are at least four clear guidelines in this regard.
 - a. The individual subordinates to the collective, and the collective respects the individual;
 - b. The minority subordinates to the majority, and the majority respects the minority; factionalism is prohibited.
 - c. The lower level structures subordinate to the higher level structures and leading organs, and the higher levels structures and leading organs listens to and respects the lower levels;
 - d. The Central Committee subordinates to the Congress and the entire organisation subordinates to the constitution.
- 7.2. If properly grasped by, these basic teachings will help members to understand how the organisation functions, enhance discipline and consolidate unity and cohesion.

8. Party Building Tasks by grass roots organs

- 8.1. To selflessly serve the community as the first task and priority, every Party member and particularly leader must have the inherent duty to build a constituency for the Party and its interventions in residential areas and relevant sectors where they are based in terms of other social activities. This must be considered as one of the principles in our fundamental criteria on what it means to be a communist and on performance assessment for members and leaders.
- 8.2. **Recruitment and training of new members:** a minimum of two years is necessary to train a comrade to meet acceptable requirements to service other members and serve the people at large in terms of Party principles. Presently the Party constitution states that a person applying for membership will be an interim member for one year, while, among others receiving the necessary training. **This requires the implementation of the Party programme on the institutionalisation of Political Education, which in turn requires institutional capacity building.** The Chinese recruit and prepare a member for two years before deployment to any Party structure. Special care is also given to the training of the Young Communists League members with more practical deployment in various tasks of Party work.
- 8.3. **Communication of Party decisions:** this should not be a by the way issue. It is a fundamental requirement of Party building and is addressed in a separate internal Party document.

8.4. **How to resource the Party:** This is a critical area of work and needs urgent attention if we are serious about Party building. What are the appropriate legitimate forms of raising funds to meet the daily tasks of Party building, campaigns, programs and operations?

8.5. Expand the various fronts of Party building and ensure on accountability.

9. Advance good activism: the Three Signs of a Good Party Activist

9.1. In our communities we need to identify what are the major challenges confronting the people and define the subsequent Party tasks to rally them around and mobilise interventions. In this respect, each branch and Party unit at various levels should identify their immediate tasks and confront them.

9.2. The following Three Signs of a Good Party Activist are essential in this process, all Party members must be oriented and must orientate themselves accordingly:

9.2.1. Visit the people in their homes through proper arrangements to talk to them and share ideas. Invite them to collective or community mass meetings to share in solutions of their common problems. Do not impose your views!

9.2.2. Be informed and inform the people about our revolution and its work, successes and challenges. Essentially account to the people truthfully – NO SPIN. So arm yourself with correct information and be truthful.

9.2.3. Be with the masses and become rooted in your community by serving them, by taking up community issues and engaging with relevant authorities and working with the masses for solutions. If there are intransigent authorities, lead the people against that intransigence. In order to earn leadership from the people Party cadres must adhere to:

10. The Tenets of Party life

10.1. Live modestly and honestly – live a simple life.

10.2. Be a good example, as stated in terms of the good servant of the people, of solidarity, humility, empathy, etc.

10.3. Always form part of the community's search for solutions and its solutions. Be there for the people, not absent!

10.4. All of these must be steeled in the historical mission of the Party which is to fight and defeat the capitalist system and end all forms of exploitation and replace it by building a socialist transitional society towards communism.

11. No woman no revolution

11.1. Women are already themselves been mobilised and have for decades of our struggle been in all trenches. There is a need, however, for this role to be supported and given space to prosper. The Party and its cadres must lead by example in deepening this mobilisation. The Party must also ensure that in its leadership ranks the minimum requirements prescribed in its constitution to achieve redress in terms of gender parity do not become maximums, and therefore stagnant. We must organically move beyond those minimums and not simply adhere to them for compliance purposes.

- 11.2. All of the Party cadres, both men and women, need to be equally sharpened in terms of political education and ideological training. However, in recognition of the patriarchal history, nature and character of our society and the negative impact on women, who have been placed in the receiving end of many social problems, the Party must strengthen its focus on women and women leadership in political education and ideological training. This itself as part of our affirmative strategy to achieve redress. This approach must apply in our attitude to the development of societal leadership.
- 11.3. All of the above must be complimented by increasing focus on women organisation and buttressed by intensified Party mobilisation against patriarchal and unequal power relations between men and women.
- 11.4. In the context of its work on the youth, the Party must particularly increase its focus on young women, who, also need to be self-sufficient, and who need to swell the ranks of our revolution for their own emancipation.

12. Develop mechanism and set basic standards and requirements for Party building.

- 12.1. What standards these should be and what should be the requirement of membership to the Party? Should this change? Below we try to summarise some ideas around setting basic standards for membership:
 - 12.1.1. Service to society as a prerequisite. This implies changing the way we recruit and admit new members into the Party by setting new admission criteria, including service to the people, in particular, the workers and the poor. What must the criteria encompass?
 - 12.1.2. Service to the Party and its members as a contribution towards party building. Members will be required to fulfil a number of free or voluntary hours to the Party at various levels as determined by the relevant Party organ under guidelines set by the Central Committee.
 - 12.1.3. Tasking of all Party members by the relevant executive structures: **the style of work of members who interface with the Party only at meetings must be abolished**. All members must find a mechanism to contribute to Party life beyond participation in meetings. They should be tasked by the corresponding leadership to embark on Party work in their communities and/or in the sectors where they are based in terms of their respective social activities.
 - 12.1.4. The Party and various levels of Party organisation should study the local conditions, internalise and deepen the capacity for constant assessment of the realities facing communities. The Central Committee may develop such a broader framework to be adapted to the local conditions.
 - 12.1.5. We need to establish a fully-fledged **Commission for Discipline and Revolutionary Morality** in order to monitor, assess and enforce ideological, political, organisational and communist discipline within the ranks of the Party and society at large.

13. Raising the bar of service to the people:

- 13.1. All members should be raising the bar on service with regard, but not limited, to the following categories:
 - a. Raising the bar of community service, service to members and the liberation forces.
 - b. Raising the bar of leadership requirements for the party and the community.

- c. Raising the bar of example in the community and other spheres of social activity.
- d. Raising the bar of discipline, self-discipline, revolutionary morality and communist conduct.
- e. Raise the bar of the ideological requirements of Party membership and improve self-cultivation of members. This is a task of all cadres and structures alike.

14. A good servant of the people: requirements and values

- 14.1. To fulfil this task of serving the people Party members must wholeheartedly give themselves to serving the working class. They must do so with, amongst others, the following distinguishable values:
 - a. Solidarity
 - b. Humility
 - c. Empathy
 - d. Dedication and
 - e. Selflessness
- 14.2. The articulation of these values is the most important one we need to deal with. The danger we have is the closeness of the livelihoods of many comrades and members of society to state jobs. We need to deal with that, **set parameters and develop a code of conduct for Party leaders and members serving or working in the public service** but as well as push for the development of our productive capacity – this perspective is elaborated in Going to the Root – our discussion document on the second, more radical phase of the NDR, its context, content and our strategic tasks. The risks of reliance of public service jobs and opportunities have deepened for our revolution in the context where the basic structure of our economy was not transformed and crisis levels of inequality, unemployment and poverty persisted.
- 14.3. We need to create a way by which we can defeat the ‘traders’ of influence and the influence that they have in determining the state of the movement through factionalisation in order to sustain lifestyles and guarantee job placements, contracts (i.e. mainly tenders) and other benefits. Ours is not the DA-type attack on the deployment of cadres.
- 14.4. We fully support cadre deployment and yet we need to address its unintended consequences that are damaging to the movement. In particular, to emphasise the point, **we need transparent processes, procedures and institutional structures within our movement functioning under the highest executive authority on the selection, preparation, selection, deployment, accountability and control of cadres as well as a comprehensive code of conduct for them.** In brief, we must assert the collective nature and character of these functions.
- 14.5. Deployment of any member must not depend on any one person in any component and at any layer of, who then dispenses patronage and factionalises our state of, organisation. Particularly at sub-national levels this has proven to be one of the serious problems we must deal with. We must deal with patronage and factionalism and confront these in the same way as we must ruthlessly deal with corruption without fear or favour.
- 14.6. At local government level, the involvement of communities in selecting leaders must be deepened under proper leadership. In general, the work of all public officials and representatives must be open to public scrutiny and assessment. Mechanisms to give effect to this organisationally and protect the process of manipulation are required in a long run so that reliance is not placed on established public institutions only.

- 14.7. The need to assert the new standard of revolutionary morality with a much deeper content, for instance, the values of serving the people: we must combat transactional relationship with the people who things simply because they are paid for the job and often that person does not see the essential content of the work as serving the people. Communist cadres need to lead in the example of service to the people.

15. The three Firsts of Party Membership

- 15.1. The following, referred to as 'The Three Firsts of Party Membership' must constitute the first three and standing tasks of all Party members, new and old:
- a. Serve the People First.
 - b. Serve the Revolution First.
 - c. Serve the Party First.

16. Task of newly recruited members

- 16.1. We need to revisit the question of interim members and their role in Party life during the interim period (already the issue of probation has been touched herein). Many branches have just recruited members without taking them through induction programme and systematic political education and ideological training.
- 16.2. New members should be encouraged and assisted to read and learn more about the Party, the Alliance and its formations and about Marxism-Leninism as the base of their communist activity. **The Party must constantly run political schools at all levels without exception.** We must be a learning Party, and a teaching Party, a Party of action, all in all, a Party of theory and practice.
- 16.3. We have not done well to integrate new members into our methods of work. Most just follow the flowing waters. We need to insist on community tasking as an integral component of the new membership requirement and improve the work of integrating new members to Party building tasks. Political education and ideological training remain essential in this respect.
- 16.4. We should further explore and relook at the appropriate form of training for new members and the content of teaching and learning to be covered, whilst not taking away community tasking as an important introduction to Party work. Interim members should be deployed to basic Party tasks under the supervision of a full member and the relevant executive organs as a way of introduction to Party life and activities.
- 16.5. There is an issue that relates to the politicisation of the members of the Party. It might be simpler to measure certain things. For instance what does it mean to be a member of the Party besides memorising this or that Communist literature or attending a meeting or action programme? The assessment tool that must be developed should take into account this aspect. But at the core of this process is the development of the quality of a cadre required by the Communist Party.
- 16.6. In addition, **we need to meticulously enforce constitutional requirements of probation for eligibility and election in the leading organs of the Party at all levels as well as public representatives.** We must combat the juniorisation of the leadership ranks of the Party. Juniorisation of the leadership ranks of the Party, often against its constitutional prescripts, is a recipe for patronage, factionalism and the collapse of quality and therefore the cause of degeneration in the leadership of the Party. The leading organs of the Party must be a vanguard by their very character and compose of the most enlightened of Party cadres who must be steeled in its history, Marxism-Leninism.

17. The SACP and, the youth and the Young Communist League

17.1. As the ANC Kabwe Conference held in 1985 observed:

"The young and rising generation constitutes a representative of the future in the broadest sense; the future of any society depends on the practical and spiritual moulding of the youth. Classes and strata act not only for their own good but also for the good of their rising generation. The youth grows and is moulded within a specific social environment – be it in the comfort and sleek surroundings of the capitalist home, school and boardrooms, the squalid conditions of the working class ghetto, the backward and wretched environment of the rural poor, or the confines of a petty-bourgeois upbringing.

The stage of youth is one of assimilating knowledge of all kinds. Avidly searching for a rational understanding of the surrounding world, the youth therefore displays curiosity, rebelliousness, impassioned and uncontrolled enthusiasms; it quickly forms judgements as it abandons others. Such a stage is crucial in the moulding of stable social being; thus all classes and strata wage relentless battles for the hearts and minds of the youth.

The youth is as enthusiastic in its search for knowledge as it is militant in the fight for the realisation of the ideals it holds dear. Having evolved an understanding of the 'right and the wrong', it displays great zeal and verve in fighting for what it conceives as just. Within the different class formations it acts as a powerful driving force, a dynamo of the class, national and international battles. It is to be found in the front trenches of practical and theoretical struggles displaying both initiative and self-sacrifice.

Due to their inexperience and illusions bred of their psychological make-up, young people can be easily swayed into positions that are counter to their interests. Thus a young worker could seek false comfort by abstaining from class battles or even by joining the exploiter's state machinery. Not seldom, young people are enticed en masse to adopt social and cultural value systems alien to their interests."

17.2. The enormity of dealing with these challenges cannot be left to the youth movement alone – including the YCL. As Kabwe further asserted:

"All societies in general, and classes in particular, pay special attention to the youth. For any people or class to shirk this responsibility is to do great harm to itself. This applies particularly to peoples struggling to break the shackles of oppression and exploitation. No revolution can be victorious without the effective education, organisation and mobilisation of the youth into political action. It is none other than the youth (especially the working youth) who form the core of the 'political' and 'military' armies of the revolution. Their youthful energy enables them to perform great feats in the theatre of battle; their vigour enables them to be the most active transmitters of ideas and skills; their zeal spreads into their surroundings like wild-fire.

The youth acts as such not as a separate contingent vis-à-vis the motive force of the revolution, but as an integral part thereof. The struggles of the youth would not count for much if they were not linked to those of the working people. At the same time, the youth lends the revolutionary struggles this youthful vigour only if and when it enjoys the guidance and experienced tutelage of the older generation. This calls for a wise approach in dealing with the youth; a balanced and timeous combination of severity and patience, seriousness and good humour."

17.3. The SACP has to develop measures to give effect to its tasks on the youth as succinctly

summarised above. In particular, the Party must empower its structures to handle matters affecting the youth. We shall return to this. First we deal with relationship between the SACP and the YCL, a perennial issue that has for some time now required our attention.

- 17.4. In its message of support to the 13th Party National Congress, the YCL, represented by its National Secretary, had the following to say:

"We are the YCLSA of the SACP. We are formed as a result of the constitution of the SACP. The dynamism of the relationship between the SACP and the YCL, its dialectic, constitutional, political and programmatic nature is what has made the YCL what it is, and similarly had an impact on the current and future nature of the SACP.

If we are not close to the leadership and structures of the SACP, who should we be close to? ... We have a platform to engage with our leadership. In fact, the average age of the membership of the SACP is youth. We will never define ourselves outside of the SACP because we are the SACP and its future. If we oppose the SACP in order to prove our autonomy, which we have as an integral part of the SACP, we will end up veering towards the oppositionists just because people claim that we are not independent.

Comrade General Secretary, young people in the YCL understands that we will do what Lenin instructed us to do. Learn! Learn and Learn! We do not suffer from a political and ideological learning deficiency to the extent that to prove that we have learnt, therefore reduce our role being to fight with the SACP in front of a conflict hungry media.

We understand that that this factory called the YCL, this university of beautiful young reds, this training ground for a future and socialist South Africa, just like all factories it will have its own factory faults, just like all universities it will have its own drop-outs, but we do our best at all times to produce the best proof cadres to take the baton from this leadership collective into the future.

Many young people are gradually finding hope in both the SACP and YCL's slogans of "Socialism is the future: Build it Now" and "Socialism in our Lifetime". As more and more young people find themselves locked in a future without jobs, education, quality public healthcare; they realise that the nightmare of capitalism has to be brought to an end and that the future of socialism is inevitable."

*This summarises the correct perspective on this organic relationship **espousing the YCLSA as an integral organ and part of the SACP. This perspective must be strengthened and build into an unbreakable pillar of guidance for all YCL members in their relation with their Party as is with the Party members who should not even see the YCL at a distance but as part of their whole.***

- 17.5. The above eloquently captures the strategic objectives that the Party's organisational review process has to strengthen with regards to the relationship between the SACP and the YCL. The following observations and complementary tasks need to be undertaken as equally important.
- 17.6. There are YCL members who just participate in the activities of the YCL and not those of the Party. Whilst some belong to SACP branches and are active members there is no systemic link of Party and YCL activities. We need to consider this matter and actually elaborate what should be considered distinct Party tasks and functions to be undertaken by all YCL members beyond the general membership of, and the constitutional link with the Party. This notwithstanding, the following pledge is proposed for all YCL members.

17.7. The youth pledge to:

- a. Serve the youth and the interests of young people;
- b. Serve the working class;
- c. Learn and work;
- d. Honour and respect fellow human beings;
- e. Sacrifice for the betterment of society.

17.8. Empower Party structures to deal with youth matters

17.8.1. Therefore corresponding Party structures should give due regard to service the YCLSA at corresponding levels starting with attending and addressing political meetings of the YCLSA, share recent decisions of the Party structures, etc., thus providing general political and ideological guidance. This should happen constantly and not by chance, and should be seen in the context of intra-Party service.

17.8.2. In recognition of the fact that our population is:

- a. significantly made up of youth;
- b. many challenges facing our society are likely to be most felt among young people mostly from the working class background;
- c. it will be a strategic error to leave the Progressive Youth Movement including the YCL alone in relation to tackling those challenges; these would require the entire movement.

17.8.3. The Party Programme states that the SACP itself must empower its own structures to deal with youth matters. This further considering that the overwhelming majority of the Party's membership is young.

17.8.4. In its reflection on the YCL, the Party Programme states that the organisation and communist education of all sections of the youth must be strengthened:

"...with particular attention being paid to young workers, students, professionals, and marginalised and unemployed youth. One of the biggest challenges facing our country is to address the needs of the youth, and one of the best ways to do this is to challenge the influence of capitalist ideology, tenderpreneurship, drugs and alcohol abuse amongst the youth."

17.8.5. The Party programme locates this in the context where ideological work among the youth to take active participation in the Progressive Youth Movement, the NDR and the struggle for socialism must itself be strengthened, and where the **YCL serves as the preparatory school for the Party. In this regard the Party has the ultimate responsibility to ensure that its preparatory school functions effectively and achieves the impact that it re-established it for** – the organisational review process must therefore streamline this principle in the definition of the relationship between the Party and the YCL.

17.8.6. The Party needs to continue to strengthen the political and organisational relationship with the YCL. Every branch of the SACP should lead the process of forming a YCL branch where none exists, working together with the respective higher leading organs of the YCL. Where there is a YCL branch and no SACP branch exists, the YCL should, as one of its first tasks, and working together with the respective higher leading organs of the Party, similarly lead the process of launching an SACP Branch and immediately accept its political guidance.

18. The SACP Organisational Review and the Alliance

- 18.1. Whilst the SACP is an independent political party, it, at the same time, is part of the Alliance with the ANC and COSATU. **However the condition for engaging in strategic and tactical alliances is, first and foremost, a strong, independent SACP that is rooted within the working class and serves as the vanguard for socialism.** This means that while strategic and/or tactical alliances are necessary in different phases of the struggle, **the point of departure must always be to build the SACP as a strong, independent vanguard Party for socialism and the working class.** This attribute is fundamental for the Party if it were to achieve its programme of building working class hegemony and power and providing communist leadership in all key sites of struggle and power, including, alliance itself.
- 18.2. In this respect part of our own organisational review must also reflect on our Alliance, the challenges facing each of its components and the whole Alliance collectively. The period lying ahead will require more, rather than less, of our Alliance, in particular, but there will necessarily arise moments for some form of other alliance engagements in order to deepen the NDR and intensify the struggle for socialism.
- 18.3. The SACP must, in any case, as we have done with most of our campaigns, seek to forge relations with a wide range of social forces to advance particular goals during different phases of our revolution. Perhaps one of the weaknesses of many communist parties in the 20th century, especially those that were in power after the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917, was their inability to form genuine and organic alliances with a wider range of progressive social forces in their societies.
- 18.4. The 13th Party Congress also spoke about the necessity to **build the independent organisational presence and influence of the SACP in all the key sites of power.** Whilst the SACP must strengthen our revolutionary Alliance, and must not seek to usurp the specific strategic roles of our Alliance partners, it must at the same time not allow its influence and hegemony to be only mediated by other alliance partners. The Party cannot be subjected to the relationship with, for instance, the unions on the basis of financial relations.
- 18.5. In other words, the fact that we are in an alliance with COSATU must not mean that the SACP can only access organised workers through COSATU or its affiliates. The Party must have its own independent presence amongst workers, both organised and unorganised. **What programmes do we need to undertake to fulfil this requirement?**
- 18.6. Similarly, while continuing to deepen the alliance with the ANC and developing direction to the politically organised masses, the Party must, simultaneously, consistently and systematically build and develop independent working class and communist leadership of society as a whole in terms of our perspective of building working class power and hegemony. Dialectically, this is important both for the SACP in, and for, the Alliance.
- 18.7. In line with the preceding points on COSATU and the ANC, we will have to carefully analyse the challenges facing our allies, and also better anticipate what kind of, for example, the ANC we are likely to have in the next 5, 10 or 20 years. Of course we are not spectators, we are part of the ANC, and we should also be engaged in an intense discussion on **what kind of the ANC we would like to see over the next decade or so.** In addition, as an integral part our society as led by the ANC, that discussion is relevant even more relevant. **What role can communists play to build such an ANC?**
- 18.8. As part of addressing the issue, we have to undertake a basic SWOT analysis of the current conjuncture in our organisational review. For example one of the major opportunities to build

an even more radical ANC is the current commitment by the ANC to a second, more radical phase of our transition. This, coupled with the current crisis of capitalism and the related crisis of neoliberalism, provides a fertile ground for an even more left-oriented ANC.

- 18.9. However, there is a persistent threat of the growth of a parasitic and compradorial bourgeoisie with access to government and the danger of such capturing the ANC and government. Elements of this parasitic (and not patriotic) bourgeoisie are the 1996 class project (which tried to legitimate being parasitic through narrow BEE) and the new tendency which sounded radical to hide their stealing from the state. We must not underestimate the possibility of these strata closing ranks against the left, despite their own different factional interests.
- 18.10. Grappling with the above issue it may be necessary that we undertake some scenario planning as a component of organisational review. Although sometimes scenario planning has the undesirable effect of turning motive forces into spectators, we must avoid this by ensuring that whatever scenario planning we do is anchored on class analysis, rather than abstract speculation.
- 18.11. Organisational review processes must also be linked to the question of the SACP and state power discussion and process. It is important that the question of the SACP and state power is not tackled in isolation and independently from the task of building working class hegemony and power in all key sites of struggle and power. It must therefore not be separated from the task of organisational review. It is important to try and settle this debate by pointing out that our ultimate goal is state power for the working class, and that the SACP, irrespective of the phase of our revolution, will always have a particular relationship to existing state power and its configuration, whether inside or outside government or both. The Party comes from, and must be rooted in, it must develop itself as the leading force of, the working class.
- 18.12. To remain relevant the SACP cannot afford to be a shadow of the ANC led liberation movement imposed by the current dispensation. The Party must engage the Alliance about its independent role in the context of consolidating, deepening and advancing the NDR, including, in expressing its own voice in parliament and legislatures within the framework of the alliance. What role should the alliance play in this regard? Could this critical matter be left to the goodwill of the ANC in the main and the Alliance in general? The SACP needs to take up the matter of the relationship with the state and the reconfiguration of the Alliance much more seriously. We cannot have a casual approach to a system of concentrated power in modern society such as the state.
- 18.13. Therefore the SACP should consistently engage with its own relations with the state and state power and utilise that to deepen relations with the ANC and the alliance components. We must openly discuss our Party's relationship to the state and to the Alliance and pose the question, does the current relationship work for the struggles of the working class?
- 18.14. In undertaking organisation review it is also going to be important for the SACP to take full stock of the implications of the changing social composition of South African society, especially in the black majority. For instance as the SACP we have correctly supported a number of important and progressive policies of the ANC-led government that have led to the significant growth of the middle strata.
- 18.15. The growth of black middle strata is an important achievement of our NDR. From all indications this stratum of our society is going to continue to grow. What kind of attitude and relationship should we seek to forge with the middle strata? For instance, components of the middle strata include professionals and small/medium enterprises. Some of our own campaigns (e.g. the financial sector campaign) have had huge resonance with significant sections of the middle strata, but we have not built on this.

- 18.16. Equally, we need to ask the question whether we have adapted well to the above mentioned changing class conditions in our society, within the working class, in the trade unions and indeed in the SACP itself and society at large. Subsequent to this we must reflect, also, on how we have responded politically to these developments? How has the changing class character and class reconfiguration of African communities impacted on us as the Party?
- 18.17. A crucial component of SACP Organisational Review is the need to significantly increase the capacity of the SACP in the battle of ideas. This is perhaps one of our areas of weakness. No Communist Party can be able to advance the struggle for socialism unless it has significant strengths in the battle of ideas. For instance we have a significant shortage of writers and theoreticians; there is a paucity of Marxist-Leninist intellectuals in our universities and broader society. Instead the small grouping of “Marxist academics” has been captured by the ultra-left, Trotskyite or other reactionary traditions. Our publications have very few comrades contributing.
- 18.18. In broader media work we were relatively weak and have recently had important improvements. There is still spacious room for improvement. We are also unable to exploit the space of social media to the fullest. A large part of our organisational review will have to focus on a concrete strategy on this front that will perhaps begin to yield some results in a decade or so, if we start addressing this in earnest from now. One of the critical challenges is how do we can intensify internal political education and writing skills, as well as effectively linking up with our higher education institutions to recruit and also train communist cadres on this front. A document entitled ‘Communication, Information and Media Strategy’ elaborating on these and other considerations has been developed for internal consumption.

19. Political education and ideological training, diversifying our methods.

- 19.1. We need to explore creative ways to integrate the Communists University or similar alternatives into the daily life of the SACP. In that regard, we perhaps need to look at bringing the Communist University more to the functional co-ordination of the Central Committee. The Party should strengthen the efforts and contributions of comrades who have managed to keep the Communist University alive and vibrant through stimulating engagements. We need to ensure that all provinces in the long run are able to run their own chapters of the Communist Universities, including, in vernacular and popular languages of the people on the ground and even cascade it to the district level. But given that this is co-ordinated nationally we do not need to rush this aspect but pay special attention on content as it drives the organisational programmes through this medium.
- 19.2. We need to redefine the concept of Full Time Professional Revolutionaries in the concept of dedicated service to the people.

20. What are the structural and institutional forms and requirements of Party organisation?

- 20.1. We have to focus attention on the efficiency, functionality and relevance of Party organisational structures, from national to branch level. We have to look at the structures of other communist parties, but at the same time structure our Party to suit our own tasks and material conditions. This must include an assessment of whether our VD based branches are working, and a reflection on the capacity of our Party structures, especially at lower levels to effectively engage in Alliance, sectoral and mass work.
- a. If we say the SACP must be in all key sites of power and fronts of struggle, what kind of districts, branches, units and cells does this require?

- b. Presently the Party constitution provides for one form of units and does not provide for cells. Is this sufficient and flexible to different conditions, sectors and social settings?
 - c. What organogram and what funding model is required of all these?
- 20.2. The Party constitution does not set boundaries for residential branches. This task is left to the Central Committee, which may set guidelines in term of the relevant provision of the Party constitution. However, the Party Programme, SARS, provides for Voting District based branches. At the 13th Party Congress which adopted the programme, it was resolved that Party organisation and the compositions of its leading organs, including the number of full time elected officials and executive members, must be flexible and fit in with corresponding conditions and the tasks facing the Party.
- a. Are there any further adjustments necessary in those respects?
- 20.3. Further, there are differences in the characteristics of rural, urban and peri-urban areas; industrial, mining and agricultural areas; city centres, suburbs and townships, as well as in the respective geographical sizes of the wards and Voting Districts. There are Voting Districts in rural areas which are far bigger than wards in urban areas and rural wards that are even bigger than several wards in urban areas combined. In urban areas, Voting Districts are small and smaller than those in rural areas in terms of geographical sizes. Also, while the Party Programme provides for Voting District Branches, it does not provide for organisational co-ordination at the ward level – which can be a political problem.
- a. How best should the Party recognise all these different characteristics through a differentiated system of branches, units and cells that is both flexible and responsive to the different local residential and workplace settings given the above considerations and examples?
 - b. In areas where there are Voting District branches, what structural and co-ordinating mechanism should the Party adopt at a ward level bearing in mind the need for a common approach to common challenges which could face the whole ward, elections and alliance relations?

21. The Do's and don'ts of Party members:

- 21.1. The Party may consider during this review process to introduce the basic areas of the dos and don'ts of Party membership.
- a. What should those be? We can outline through a discussion what should be associated with Party members and what should not be associated with them. For instance, can we have members who are criminals, who are corrupt, etc.?
 - b. Equally important, what are the main features of being a Party member? What does it mean to be a Communist? Can we enforce the content of the answers to these questions as part of the critical requirements of Party membership and leadership?

22. Towards a conclusion

- 22.1. All of the above will have to culminate, as it were, on what kind of SACP cadre we need now and into the next 20 or more years to come. How do we produce that kind of a cadre? What kind of exposure or education do we need to invest in for that purpose? How do we use all the resources available to produce the kind of an SACP cadre we need? Our organisational

review process will have to spend a great deal of time discussing this matter and come out with clear plans and programmes.

- 22.2. These tasks and requirement of building a militant and fighting Party of socialism has become a necessity to survive the ferocious attacks of the brutal capitalist system that is capturing even the modest of revolutionaries. The Party has to equip itself, calculate the risks correctly and develop appropriate interventions in order to advance the struggle for socialism or live forever under capitalist exploitation – which is not an option.
- 22.3. If the Party is unable to do this it will not avoid the peril of irrelevance and insignificance, particularly if we do not change the way we operate or even perceived to be. This unavoidable consequence needs deep reflections and discussions.
- 22.4. We extol our comrades to seriously debate the issues as raised in this document, develop effective strategies, organisational and political solutions confronting our revolution.
- 22.5. The SACP has developed a revolutionary programme of building working class hegemony in all key sites of power, SARS anchored on the strategic focus of the MTV. This programme also emphasises the necessity for the SACP to be in all sites and terrains of struggle, including spelling out some of the key terrains and fronts of struggle which we have mentioned above. In those key sites of struggle and power we are to find important sectors of our society, such as the youth, women, the trade unions, etc. All these and other sectors must be taken seriously. Whilst we must be cautious that the organisational review exercise must not be an attempt to rewrite our programme, it must nevertheless be based on a very concrete understanding of the challenges over the next 20 years or more.
- 22.6. We need critical thinkers to lay a firm foundation of developing an enduring framework to build a formidable, determined, strong and united revolutionary working class Party in the SACP to lead the struggle for a socialist South Africa, a society free of all forms of exploitation!

Long live the SACP!

Socialism is the Future! Build it now, with and for the workers and the poor!

Chapter 3

Selected international lessons

23. Lesson Number One: The People's Republic of China – Communist Party of China (CPC)

23.1. During the visit we learnt some important lessons on Party organization and even challenges faced by the socialist construction in the PRC.

23.1.1. They are facing a similar challenge of compradorial bourgeoisie as we have here of the BEE groupings.

23.1.2. This arises out of their own created socialist market economy and the consequence of un-equal and unbalanced accumulation between the urban and the rural areas, even between the East and Western regions and amongst the people based on their deployment including Party cadres deployed in the private enterprises that have invested in the PRC. Nonetheless, the Chinese base their political posture, mainly, from their own research and internal capacity but also use the state institutions as those are under the leadership of the CPC with a nation that also accepts the overall leadership of the CPC.

23.1.3. They have critical research capacity in the various organs of the Central Committee. For instance, our Central Committee commissions would in their case be research units of the Central Committee, which studies their particular sector and makes a presentation to the Secretariat and the PB for consideration by the Central Committee.

23.2. Structure of the Central Committee and its organs

23.2.1. The CC of the CPC remains a big political body of specialists in various fields. It has 205 members elected in the recent 18th Party Congress of November 14, 2012.

- a. It meets once in a year through a well-researched agenda of the plenary session. There could be other plenary sessions convened as the need arise during the year.
- b. Since the 18th Congress in November 2012, the CPC Central Committee just convened only the 4th Plenary Session on the 1st week of October 2014.

23.2.2. The Congress also elects 130 members of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection of the CPC. This body is responsible for overseeing cadres discipline and conduct, in line with but broader than the ANC Integrity Commission.

23.2.3. The Discipline Inspection has a Secretary and eight Deputy Secretaries and its own Standing (Working) Committee of 19 comrades.

23.2.4. The 18th Congress CC has 25 Politburo members. Only two are female

23.2.5. The PB elects a Seven members (07) Standing Committee of the PB of the 18th Congress of CPC Central Committee, all these members are full-time

23.2.6. They have the Office of the General Secretary with the General Secretary without any deputy.

23.2.7. They have Seven Members of the 18th CPC Central Committee Secretariat. These are full-time Central Committee members drawn from the PB and Standing Committee. This team oversees the overall daily affairs of the Party and the government.

23.2.8. Then they have the CPC Central Military Commission with the GS as the Chairman and two Vice Chairmen plus eight other members.

23.2.9. The Central Military Commission is important in the context of the PRC because it is the body responsible for stable transfer of power in China. It is also important to note that in the PRC the CPC is the body entrusted with the ownership of the defence force. Whilst the army belongs to the people of the PRC as a whole, it also belongs to the Party. It is a Political army and it is still called the People's Liberation Army.

24. Lesson Number Two: The Socialist Republic of Cuba – Communist Party of Cuba (CPC)

24.1. The CPC is also structured more or less the same as the Chinese model. The difference is that the People's Congress in China has a huge standing in society even though the Party role remains widely accepted as the vanguard of the Chinese society.

24.2. The primary lesson from the Communist Party of Cuba, is that the majority of Party members are recruited from within the ranks of workers at the shop floor level through the Workers Assembly.

24.3. It is then that a member is identified in terms of his or her qualities and then referred to the Party for recruitment. The Party will then conduct evaluation of the member's conduct and do neighbourhood assessment or interviews with the member including of his/her family, particularly of the spouse.

24.4. The Cuban society is a workers' state, so the organisation of workers at the shop floor is taken seriously and organised differently from those in the capitalist forms of production.

24.5. In Cuba, the Workers Assembly is arguably the centre of pride of conscious socialist construction, solidarity and human service by workers.

24.6. The other key example is the method of recruitment and probation.

25. Comparisons and similarities

25.1. Similarities, with the two models are that, all the Parties have come to power through armed insurrection and could impose their own socio economic system and overall societal direction.

25.2. All the Parties have introduced the notion of probation for all members with an extensive training programme before members are allowed into Party life and system. This doesn't take away the variations and even betrayal by some members who underwent the probation process.

25.3. Members of these organisations follow the notion of the Party mass line. It is also important for the Party to revisit the notion of the mass line in the Party. We have observed that in all the Communist Parties in power that have survived the collapse of Eastern bloc socialism they have kept a basic coordination of the mass line concept and even in Cuba one of the standing pillars is the content of the Party mass line.

25.4. The concept of the Party line has been a major issue for discussions within the communist movement for quite some time. The SACP does not necessary subscribe to this notion but practices the principle of democratic centralism which entails a dialectical combination of democracy and centralism involving 'Freedom of discussion, unity of action' (V.I Lenin, 1906; 'Report on the Unity Congress...': 'The Congress Summed Up').

- 25.5. Some of the Marxist scholars like the Vietnamese revolutionary Le Duan have written extensively on the concepts with a deeper focus on the notion of the line and the cadre and the relationship between the two. The SACP may wish to develop on this literature as it seeks to perfect the system of Party organisation and streamline it in the organisational review process.
- 25.6. Both are firm adherents of the democratic centralism system to unite the organisations and to govern society. They all have a quick system of communication with members in their thousands and millions within a short space of time.

26. Some questions for consideration on the selected international lessons

- 26.1. If these are amongst the core basis of what pulls together and coheres these organisations, how do they relate to our weakness in building a strong and disciplined organisation able to lead the struggle for socialism.
- 26.2. On the international benchmarking we need to check which aspects of their work have been the most successful and why are they successful? It is obvious from the outside that some of the features of their success is institutionalisation of their work.
- a) They have full time revolutionaries. We had similar trends when we were outside and in Robben Island.
 - b) The international experiences are but examples of what our peer organisations are modelled on and how they have over the years sustained growing Party organisations. We have to first consider the obtaining local conditions to ensure we have a suitable environment for what we deem universal and necessary to apply to our circumstances.

27. What are the other questions we must respond to, or we need to emphasise?

- 27.1. If we are to embark on a huge mass debate by our structures, we have to guide the process not exclusively but on strategic issues. We could even group the questions in the document to be produced according to some key themes and programmatic intents and postulates, namely strategic political and ideological questions, organisational design/modelling questions and organisational building and campaigns related questions. All of these must be considered as mutually reinforcing than exclusive. Some of the questions we may consider as we prepare for the review process could amongst others include the following ten questions for example:
- a. What are the strategic political and organisational tasks facing the working class and the South African NDR in the current conjecture and what should be our political and organisational response?
 - b. What should constitute the key tasks of Party building in each pillar of the SARS – namely in our communities, in the workplace, in the economy, in the state, the international terrain, the ideological terrain, the environment?
 - c. What are the main challenges faced by a communist party in a capitalist society, that is in alliance with a multi class liberation movement and still remain committed to mobilising for socialism and how does it relates to the state and state power relations and how does this relation influence the organisational review process?
 - d. How should we engage, attract and bring back the intelligentsia and academics, the White, Coloured and Indian working class and Professionals into the ranks of the revolutionary movement and principled left platforms?

- e. Is there inherent contradictions between a democratic developmental state and the mass movement characterised by heightened activism and how has the democratic movement and the Party responded to this question?
- f. How should we mobilise the NGO sector to advance transformational, developmental, advocacy and support role than oppositionist and rejectionist posture that is even hostile?
- g. What are the SACP's major ideological, organisational and structural weaknesses, shortcomings and impediments in building an agile, effective, dynamic, militant and strong organisation and how to overcome these?
- h. Inversely, what are the SACP's major strengths and abilities? How to enhance and improve them to realise our strategic ideological political objectives?
- i. What are possible implications of Party organisational review process to the Alliance in the next medium- to long-term? How can these be utilised to strengthen and reinforce Alliance whilst building working class power and hegemony in all sites and terrains of struggles?
- j. How should we build the SACP as an independent, militant revolutionary working class Party of socialism able to build a strong profile and access to workers, both organised and unorganised? This would also mean aggressively accessing workers outside the main base of COSATU unions.
- k. What is the role of the YCL in organisational review process? How should we engage the youth, both through the YCL and independently, in all sites and terrains of struggle in our society including the socialtariat and the entire cybertariat, in the Blogs, Twitter, Facebook etc. to the ideas of socialism, community service and human solidarity and development? Equally related to this would be how to vitiate our different forms of Party building in line with our different communities and social strata and even interests?
- l. In all of the above what kind of a cadre do we need to carry out these tasks, and what are creative forms and methods to build this cadre?

Defend, Advance, Deepen the National Democratic Revolution: The vanguard role of the SACP





12

To Facilitate the Processing of these Proposed Amendments, please consider the Constitutional Committee's "Proposed Constitutional Amendments" Document of 17 May 2017 attached.

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

CONSTITUTION

(As amended at the 13th National Congress, July 2012)

1. NAME

The name of the organisation shall be the South African Communist Party (SACP).

2. SYMBOL AND FLAG

The symbol of the SACP shall be a black star containing a gold hammer and sickle. The flag of the SACP shall be red with the symbol placed in the top left-hand corner.

3. AIMS

- 3.1 The SACP strives to be the leading political force of the South African working class whose interests it promotes in the struggle to advance, deepen and defend the national democratic revolution and to achieve socialism.
- 3.2 The SACP shall pursue this by means of educating, organising and mobilising the working class and its allies in support of our Party and its objectives of completing the national democratic revolution and achieving socialism.
- 3.3 The SACP shall strive to win acceptance as a vanguard democratically in ideological contest with other political parties.
- 3.4 The ultimate aim of the SACP is the building of a communist society in which all forms of exploitation of person by person will have ended and in which all the products of human endeavour will be distributed according to need. The attainment of such a society will require an interim socialist formation in which reward will be measured by contribution.
- 3.5 At all stages the SACP commits itself to a social order that will respect completely the cultural, language and religious rights of all sections of our society and the democratic rights of the individual. The SACP will recognise the right to independence of all social organisations and political parties that function within the ambit of South Africa's Constitution. This implies a multi-party political framework in which there will be regular, open and free elections. Within such a framework, the SACP will primarily dedicate itself to advancing the interests of the working class and its allies in democratic contest with other political forces in all spheres of life.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In leading the working class towards national and social emancipation, the SACP is guided by those principles of Marxism-Leninism whose universal validity has been proven by historical experience. The foundations of these principles were laid by Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels and Vladimir Lenin and enriched by other great revolutionaries. In applying the general principles of Marxism-Leninism, the SACP is, in the first place, concerned with their indigenous elaboration and application to the concrete realities of our own developing situation. More particularly, the SACP will work to:

- 4.1 End the system of capitalist exploitation in South Africa and to establish a socialist society based on the common ownership of, participation in, and control by the producers of the key means of production. Such a society will respect and protect all personal non-exploitative property.
- 4.2 Organise, educate and lead the working class in the struggle for socialism and the more immediate objectives of defending and deepening the national democratic revolution and of achieving national and social emancipation. The main aim of the unfolding national democratic revolution is to complete the national liberation of the African people in particular and black people in general, to ensure the destruction of the legacy of white supremacy, and the strengthening of democracy in every sphere of life. By participating in this revolution, the SACP aims to eradicate patriarchal relations, and weaken and ultimately destroy the economic and political power of the capitalist class through struggle for working class hegemony over society, in particular the ownership and control of the economy and the achievement of one united state of people's power. In this state, working class interests will be dominant and the economic conditions will be created which make it possible to move towards social emancipation and, eventually, the total abolition of the exploitation of person by person in both public and private spheres of life.
- 4.3 Organise, educate and advance women within the working class, the poor and rural communities in pursuit of the aims of the SACP; and to raise the consciousness of the working class and its allies around the integral and oppressive nature of gender relations within South African capitalism.
- 4.4 Play a key role in strengthening the revolutionary alliance of all classes and strata whose interests are served by the immediate aims of the national democratic revolution.
- 4.5 Spread the widest possible understanding of our basic ideology and its application to South African conditions, particularly among the working class.
- 4.6 Pay particular attention to uniting the different strata of the working class.
- 4.7 Combat racism, tribalism, sex discrimination, regionalism, chauvinism, xenophobia and all forms of narrow nationalism.
- 4.8 Encourage an ongoing national and international dialogue with all organisations committed to peace, transformation of gender relations, non-racialism, democracy and the preservation of our environment.
- 4.9 Promote the ideas of proletarian internationalism and the unity of the workers of South Africa and the world.

5. MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1 Every South African over the age of 16 who accepts the Constitution, aims, guiding principles, policies and programmes of the SACP, undertakes to carry out its decisions and to be active in a SACP structure, pays whatever dues are decided on, and serves a year as an interim member shall be eligible for membership.

- 5.2 The recruiting of members shall be primarily through the branch structures, under the supervision of provincial executive committees, provincial councils, district executive committees and district councils.
- 5.3 A person applying to join the SACP shall be an interim member for 1 year. An interim member shall participate in SACP structures and activities but shall not have the right to vote or be elected to any executive structure of the SACP. To qualify for membership, the interim member has to become familiar with the SACP Constitution and policies, and participate in Party programmes and campaigns. The Branch Executive Committee, or in the case of a new branch, the District Executive Committee or Provincial Executive Committee as provided for in section 21.6, shall confer membership on an interim member
- 5.4 After consultation with PECs, the Central Committee (CC) shall provide guidelines to give effect to the provisions in this Constitution on interim membership.
- 5.5 A person who does not qualify for citizenship or permanent residence in South Africa may be accepted as an associate member if his/her application is accepted by the Central Committee. An associate member shall have full constitutional rights and obligations but may not stand for election as a member of the executive at any level of the SACP.
- 5.6 Any applicant refused admission to membership by a branch including an interim member having served a year in the branch shall have the right to appeal against such a decision to the District Council. Should the appeal fail, the applicant shall have the right to refer such appeal progressively up to the higher structures of the SACP.
- 5.7 All members shall renew their membership on an annual basis in order to remain members of the SACP, and shall remain active in the work of the SACP.
- 5.8 All new members of the SACP shall undergo comprehensive induction training under the direction of the Branch, District and Provincial structures.
- 5.9 Every member has a duty to:
 - 5.9.1 Regularly participate in the activities of the SACP and conscientiously implement the policies, decisions and directives of the party.
 - 5.9.2 Study Marxism-Leninism and endeavour to raise his/her level of understanding.
 - 5.9.3 Read, engage with and popularise SACP publications.
 - 5.9.4 Serve the masses, strengthen ties with them, learn from them, convey their aspirations to the SACP and work in mass organisations within the framework of SACP policies and programmes.
 - 5.9.5 Place the interests of the workers and the poor above personal interests.
 - 5.9.6 Practice criticism and self-criticism with a view to helping each other and improving individual and collective work.
 - 5.9.7 Cultivate comradely relations towards one another and constantly develop a fraternal spirit within the SACP.
 - 5.9.8 Act in a manner that is frank, honest and truthful to the SACP and does not betray the interests of the Party.
 - 5.9.9 Safeguard the unity and solidarity of the SACP and vigorously defend the interests of the workers and the poor against their opponents.
 - 5.9.10 Act in the interests of proletarian internationalism.



5.9.11 Act, in his or her personal conduct, in a manner which will bring credit to the SACP and serve as a standard bearer of the highest communist ethic and morality.

5.9.12 Observe the SACP Constitution and Party discipline.

5.10 All SACP members who earn above a certain amount, as determined by the CC, shall pay a levy to be determined by the CC from time to time.

5.11 Every person who joins the SACP must pledge as follows:

"I accept the aims and objectives of the SACP and agree to abide by its Constitution and loyally to carry out the decisions of the Party.

I shall strive to live up to the ideals of Communism and shall selflessly serve the workers and the poor and the country, always placing the interests of the Party and the workers and the poor above personal interests."

5.12 A member in good standing is one who is paid-up and fulfills the basic requirements set out in this section. The number of years a member has been in good standing does not include the 1 year served as interim member, where applicable.

6. BASIC ORGANISATIONAL PRINCIPLES

6.1 The Party shall function according to the conventional principles of democratic centralism that Communist Parties have traditionally adhered to.

6.2 To secure the unity and cohesion of the SACP, members are obliged to defend the SACP and to carry out its decisions. All decisions taken by higher structures are binding on all lower structures and individual members. Members shall have the right to pursue their views internally in the lead up to conferences or congresses with powers under this constitution to determine or reverse SACP policies. No groupings with their own ideology, theory and discipline shall be permitted.

6.3 All higher structures shall be accountable to lower structures and to the membership in the formulation and implementation of policies and, for this purpose, shall wherever possible ensure regular and effective consultation with lower structures and the membership prior to the finalisation and implementation of major policies.

6.4 Save as provided for in this constitution, all elected office bearers of the SACP and all structures with the power to formulate and direct SACP policies at any level shall be elected by secret ballot unless a minimum of 75% of the delegates decide otherwise.

6.5 Members active in fraternal organisations or in any sector of the mass movement have a duty to set an example of loyalty, hard work and zeal in the performance of their duties and shall be bound by the discipline and decisions of such organisations and the movement. They shall not create or participate in SACP caucuses within such organisations and the movement designed to influence either elections or policies. The advocacy of SACP policy on any question relating to the internal affairs of any such organisations or the movement shall be by open public statements or at joint meetings between representatives of the SACP and such organisations or the movement.

6.6 Members who are elected to positions at a higher level may not stand for election to positions at a lower level in the SACP. They may serve as ex-officio members of immediate lower structures.

6.7 It shall be the duty of delegates to fairly and effectively convey to Congress and policy-making

conferences the mandate of the constituency that elected them. However, delegates attending such Congresses and conferences shall not be rigidly bound by these mandates and may discuss and vote on the basis of debates at such Congresses and conferences.

- 6.8 Employees of the SACP may not serve as elected members of constitutional structures at the same level at which they are employed, but they may serve in an advisory capacity. They may serve on and be elected to SACP structures at lower levels. If an employee of the SACP is elected to a position in the executive of the SACP at the same level, he/she must relinquish his/her original position as an employee of the SACP within a month of being elected.
- 6.9 All structures of the SACP shall encourage the practice of constructive criticism and self-criticism in party structures.
- 6.10 In all work and at every level, party structures and members shall ensure that the struggle against patriarchy and for the transformation of gender relations is given due importance, including by the creation of appropriate structures empowered to perform this task. At least one third of all executives of the SACP from branch level to the Central Committee shall be women.
- 6.11 Executive structures of the SACP shall have the right to co-opt SACP veterans, who shall have non-voting status. Veterans are those who have served the party with distinction for 40 years and more.
- 6.12 Ex-officio members of SACP structures shall not exercise a vote in those structures.

7. Young Communist League of South Africa (YCLSA)

- 7.1 There shall be a Young Communist League (YCLSA) which comprises people from 14 to 35 years old who support the Constitution, aims, guiding principles, goals, policies and programmes of the SACP. The YCLSA shall be the autonomous youth organisation of the SACP.
- 7.2 While the YCLSA shall take its own decisions and shape its own policies and programmes, these shall not be in conflict with the major policies and programmes of the SACP. If necessary, the CC shall, after consultation with the YCLSA, adopt guidelines to give practical effect to this clause.

8. NATIONAL CONGRESS

- 8.1 The highest authority of the SACP shall be a National Congress which shall be called every 5 years. The CC may convene other Special National Congresses which shall have the same power as the main National Congress except for the provisions relating to the election of office bearers and members of the CC. Such a Special National Congress may, however, decide on elections by a 75% majority. A Special National Congress shall be convened by the CC if directed to do so by a decision of more than two-thirds of the provinces.
- 8.2 The National Congress shall be constituted by elected delegates from the branches and directly elected and co-opted CC members. All SACP provinces shall be represented in proportion to their membership in branches. The CC shall prior to each National Congress determine the total number of elected delegates and shall allocate a quota to each province in proportion to its membership as organized in branches. The provinces shall then allocate a quota of delegates from the Provincial Executive Committee (PEC) and for branches in proportion to their membership. The CC shall decide the number of voting delegates that the YCL shall be entitled to. The CC shall have the authority to invite non-voting delegates made up of veterans and similar categories. With the permission of the National Congress such delegates may

attend and participate in all closed sessions. A Special National Congress shall be constituted on similar lines as a National Congress.

- 8.3 The National Congress shall discuss the reports of the CC, receive and discuss an audited financial statement and the report of the National Treasurer, examine and decide the policies of the SACP, and shall be, save for the exception provided for in clause 8.1, the only authority with the power to elect the General Secretary, National Chairperson, National Treasurer, 2 Deputy General Secretaries, Deputy National Chairperson, and members of the CC. The Central Committee shall ensure that all major draft documents for the consideration of the National Congress shall be circulated to all structures at least 2 months prior to the Congress. All comments, resolutions and proposals on such documents shall be tabled at the National Congress.
- 8.4 Unless otherwise decided by the National Congress, its plenary proceedings shall be in open session. Unless otherwise provided for in this constitution, all decisions of the National Congress shall be by a simple majority through a show of hands.

9. THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE (CC)

Unless otherwise provided for in this constitution, the Central Committee (CC) shall have the power to direct the work of the SACP, to determine all questions of policy, and to issue binding instructions and directives to all levels of the SACP, save that any departure from major policy decisions of the National Congress demanded by changing conditions shall only be made after full consultation with the membership. The CC shall:

- 9.1 Consist of 35 (44) members elected at the National Congress, the General Secretary, National Chairperson, National Treasurer, 1st Deputy General Secretary, Deputy National Chairperson, and 2nd and 3rd Deputy General Secretaries and, in addition to those directly elected, the Secretaries and Chairpersons of all the provinces, who, together with the national secretary and national chairperson of the YCL, shall be ex-officio members. The General Secretary and 3 Deputy General Secretaries shall constitute the Secretariat, led by the General Secretary. Any Provincial Secretary or Chairperson elected to the CC in his/her own right shall forfeit his/her position on the PEC. The CC shall have the right to co-opt 5 members, apart from veterans. The CC shall include at least one-third women in its make-up, including after co-option. All nominations for the elected members of the CC shall be submitted by provinces to the CC not later than 2 weeks before the National Congress. Nominations from the floor of the Congress shall be accepted if seconded by a minimum of 40% of Congress delegates. Only a person who has been a member in good standing in the SACP for more than 10 years and has been a SACP or YCLSA PEC member for at least 6 years shall be eligible for election to the CC.
- 9.2 If the Provincial Secretary confirms in writing that he or she is unable to attend a CC meeting the 1st Deputy Provincial Secretary shall attend. If the 1st Deputy Provincial Secretary confirms in writing that he or she is also unavailable, the 2nd Deputy Provincial Secretary shall attend a CC meeting. If the Provincial Chairperson confirms in writing that he or she is unavailable to attend a CC meeting the Deputy Provincial Chairperson.
- (Deleted: Meet at least every 4 months in plenary session. Any major draft political reports to be considered by the plenary session shall be timeously circulated to the membership for comments and criticisms.)
- 9.3 Meet at least every 4 months in plenary session. Any major draft political reports to be considered by the plenary session shall be timeously circulated to the membership for comments and criticisms.

- 9.4 Decide on the specific portfolios of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Deputy General Secretaries, provided these portfolios include policy, organisation-building, campaigns and administration.
- 9.5 Decide who will be the full-time members of the CC, provided that at least one member of the Secretariat serves full-time.
- 9.6 Ensure that all elected office bearers, CC members, provincial committees, other party structures and members carry out their duties effectively.
- 9.7 Control and supervise all national SACP media and set up the necessary structures for their effective functioning.
- 9.8 Stimulate and provide a flow of education in Marxist-Leninist theory and its application to our conditions for all SACP members, and promote cadre development.
- 9.9 Inform and guide the membership on current political developments and also provide regular information on SACP organisational activities.
- 9.10 Represent the SACP nationally in its relations with other political parties and organisations.
- 9.11 Manage and control all SACP property and funds.
- 9.12 Have the right by a two-thirds majority (excluding the comrade affected) to remove or suspend any of its members from serving on the CC for any serious misconduct detrimental to the SACP. Any such actions shall be reported to the membership.
- 9.13 Appoint from among its members the heads of Commissions. Elected CC members shall be obliged to work within a Commission of the SACP as deployed by the CC. Failure to participate in the work of the Commission shall be reported to the CC by the Head of Commission.
- 9.14 Consider the removal of CC members who fail to attend 3 consecutive CC meetings, without tendering apologies or providing reasonable explanations for their absence.

10. POLITICAL BUREAU (PB)

- 10.1 The CC shall meet immediately after the Congress and shall, through the consensus of at least 60% of the CC appoint from its ranks 11 members, who together with the elected office bearers, shall constitute the Political Bureau (PB). At least 7 of the additional PB members shall be appointed to specific portfolios, including organising, fund-raising, political education and international relations. If there is not the necessary consensus on the appointments, the CC shall elect the 11 additional members of the Politburo through a secret ballot. The national secretary of the YCLSA shall be an ex-officio member of the PB.
- 10.2 The PB shall conduct the current work of the SACP and shall exercise all the powers and functions of the CC between meetings of the CC, except those powers and functions which this constitution specifically reserves for plenary sessions of the CC.
- 10.3 The PB shall meet at least once a month. It shall establish whatever administrative structures it deems necessary to facilitate the carrying out of its decisions between meetings of the PB.
- 10.4 The CC shall constantly assess and evaluate the work of the PB, and where necessary, shall recall members of the PB.
- 10.5 Any member of the CC may, by invitation of the PB, attend any of its meetings.



- 10.6 The PB shall have the right by a two-third majority decision (excluding the comrade affected) to suspend any comrade from the PB for any serious misconduct detrimental to the SACP. Such a decision shall be enforced until the next plenary session of the CC which shall either confirm or reverse the PB decision.

11. DUTIES OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

The General Secretary shall be the leading National Office Bearer of the SACP according to conditions determined by the CC. The General Secretary shall be an ex officio member of all party structures and shall:

- 11.1 Keep (or cause to be kept) the minutes of all CC and PB meetings and such other books, records and archives as may be required.
- 11.2 Attend to the correspondence of the CC and PB.
- 11.3 Maintain regular personal and written contact with all the provinces and keep the membership informed of the work of the CC and PB.
- 11.4 Ensure that members of the CC are kept informed of the work of the PB in between meetings of the CC.
- 11.5 Draw up (or cause to be drawn up) all reports and documents as may be decided upon by the CC or PB.
- 11.6 The Deputy General Secretaries shall, as directed by the CC, taking into account their respective portfolios, deputise for the General Secretary in respect of all the functions set out above.

12. DUTIES OF THE NATIONAL CHAIRPERSON

The National Chairperson shall rank after the General Secretary as a national office bearer of the SACP and shall be an ex officio member of all party structures. The National Chairperson shall:

- 12.1 Preside at all meetings of the CC and PB in conformity with the constitution and other rules and procedures adopted by these bodies.
- 12.2 Have a deliberative vote only.
- 12.3 The Deputy National Chairperson shall, as directed by the CC, deputise for the National Chairperson in respect of all the functions set out above.

13. DUTIES OF THE NATIONAL TREASURER

The National Treasurer shall:

- 13.1 Under the direction of the CC and PB take all necessary measures to ensure that the SACP is provided with sufficient means to carry out its political and organisational tasks.
- 13.2 Dispose of such funds as the CC authorised by general or specific mandate.
- 13.3 Be responsible for the safe-keeping and administration of all property and monies of the SACP.
- 13.4 Keep such books and accounts as will clearly record and reflect the financial position of the SACP and submit statements of income and expenditure to the CC and PB at intervals to be determined by the CC and PB.

- 13.5 Under the direction of the CC present audited financial statements and written financial reports to the Congress.
- 13.6 Be the convenor of a Finance Committee appointed by the CC.

14. SUB-NATIONAL STRUCTURES

- 14.1 The SACP shall have 9 provincial structures whose boundaries shall coincide with the boundaries of the 9 provinces of the country.
- 14.2 In each province, there shall be the following structures:
 - 14.2.1 Provincial Councils and PECs.
 - 14.2.2 District Councils and District Executive Committees (DECs).
 - 14.2.3 Branches and Branch Executive Committees (BECs).
 - 14.2.4 Where appropriate, Sub-Districts may be established.

15. PROVINCIAL CONGRESS

Subject to the other provisions of this Constitution, the Provincial Congress shall be the highest structure of the SACP in each province. The Provincial Congress shall:

- 15.1 Be held every 3 years.
- 15.2 Be attended by elected branch delegates in proportion to their paid-up branch membership. All members of the PEC, and the District Secretary and Chairperson of each DEC shall be delegates. The PEC shall, subject to any directives that may be provided by the CC, decide on the number of voting delegates at the Provincial Congress to which the YCLSA in the province shall be entitled. One non-voting delegate from each Unit may attend.
- 15.3 Receive and consider reports from the PEC and, subject to the other provisions of the constitution, make whatever decisions it considers necessary to advance SACP organisation and policies in its province.
- 15.4 Elect the Provincial Secretary, Provincial Chairperson, Provincial Treasurer, Deputy Provincial Chairperson, 1st Deputy Provincial Secretary, 2nd Deputy Provincial Secretary, and up to 24 (ordinary members of the PEC. The Provincial Secretary and 2nd Deputy Provincial Secretaries shall constitute the Provincial Secretariat, led by the Provincial Secretary.
- 15.5 Only a person who has been in the SACP as a member in good standing for more than 7 years and has served in a SACP or YCLSA DEC for at least 4 years shall be eligible for election to a PEC.

16. THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

Between Provincial Congresses, the Provincial Council shall be the highest decision-making body in the province. It shall:

- 16.1 Consist of all members of the PEC, the chairpersons and secretaries of each DEC, and delegates representing branches in proportion to their membership. The PEC shall, subject to any directives that may be provided by the CC, decide on the number of voting delegates at the Provincial Council to which the YCLSA in the province shall be entitled. One non-voting delegate from each Unit may attend.

16.2 Meet at least once every 4 months.

16.3 Fill any vacant PEC positions provided that these do not exceed a third of the PEC.

17. PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (PEC)

The Provincial Executive Committee (PEC) shall comprise those elected in terms of 15.4, co-opted in terms of 17.8, and the Secretary and the Chairperson of each DEC as ex-officio members. The provincial secretary and provincial chairperson of the YCLSA shall be ex-officio members of the PEC. The PEC shall be the body responsible for carrying out all decisions of the Provincial Congress and the Provincial Council. It:

17.1 Shall decide who shall be full-time members of the PEC, provided at least one of the members of the Provincial Secretariat is full-time.

17.2 Shall meet immediately after its election to appoint a Provincial Working Committee (PWC) through the consensus of at least 60% of PEC members present at a quorate meeting. The PWC shall consist of all the Provincial Office Bearers and not less than 3 additional members of the PEC. The PEC shall decide on specific portfolios of the Deputy Provincial Secretaries, provided that these portfolios include organisation-building, campaigns and administration. The majority of the additional members of the PWC shall be appointed to specific portfolios. The PEC shall decide on the portfolios. A minority of PWC members may be appointed without portfolios. If there is not the necessary consensus on the portfolios or who should be appointed to them, an election by secret ballot shall be held for the additional PWC members. The provincial secretary of the YCLSA shall be an ex-officio member of the PWC. The PWC shall meet at least once every fortnight and implement all the decisions of the PEC.

17.3 Shall meet at least once a month.

17.4 Shall submit reports to the CC, the Provincial Congress and the Provincial Council as often as is required.

17.5 Shall appoint provincial organisers and other staff in consultation with the CC.

17.6 Shall organise, establish and service districts and/or branches in its province.

17.7 Shall establish appropriate provincial structures consistent with national guidelines to carry out political, organisational, financial and campaign tasks.

17.8 Shall, if necessary, co-opt up to 3 members into the PEC.

18. DISTRICT CONGRESS

The PEC may form a District consisting of not less than 10 branches. After consulting with the PECs, the CC shall draw up a policy framework to determine the boundaries of districts. This policy framework shall take into account the boundaries and size of municipalities.

Subject to the provisions of this constitution, the District Congress shall be the highest structure of the SACP in each district. The District Congress shall:

18.1 Be held at least once every 2 (3) years.

18.2 Be attended by delegates elected by branches in proportion to their membership. All members of the District Executive Committee (DEC) shall be delegates to the District Congress. The DEC shall, subject to any directives that may be provided by the CC and PEC, decide on the number of voting delegates at the District Congress to which the YCLSA in the District shall be entitled. One non-voting delegate from each unit may attend.

- 18.3 Receive and consider reports from the DEC and, subject to the provisions of the constitution, take all decisions to implement the policies and programmes of the SACP in the district.
- 18.4 Elect the District Secretary, Chairperson, Treasurer, Deputy Secretary, Deputy Chairperson and a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 20 District Executive members. [The DEC will elect an Internal Secretary for Organizing and Campaigns and Internal Secretary for Political Education and Ideological Development among its members.](#) Only a person who has been in the SACP for more than 5 years as a member in good standing and has served in a SACP or YCLSA BEC for at least 3 years shall be eligible for election to the DEC. The District Secretary and District Chairperson of the YCLSA shall be ex-officio members of the DEC. The DEC may co-opt up to 3 additional members into the DEC. The DEC shall appoint a District Working Committee (DWC) immediately after the District Congress through the consensus of at least 60% of the DEC members present at a quorate meeting. The DWC shall consist of the District Office Bearers and not less than 3 additional members of the DEC. The majority of the additional members shall be appointed to specific portfolios. The portfolios shall be consistent with the portfolios established at provincial level. The District Secretary of the YCLSA shall be an ex-officio member of the DWC. The DWC shall meet at least once every fortnight, and implement all decisions of the DEC and higher structures where relevant.

19. THE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Between District Congresses, the District Council shall be the highest decision-making body in the District. It shall consist of all members of the DEC and delegates in proportion to their branch membership. The DEC shall, subject to any directives that may be provided by the CC and PEC, decide on the number of voting delegates at the District Council to which the YCLSA in the District shall be entitled. One non-voting delegate from each unit may attend. The District Council shall:

- 19.1 Meet at least once every 3 months.
- 19.2 Have the power to fill vacancies on the DEC provided they do not exceed one-third of its members.

20. DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (DEC)

The District Executive Committee (DEC) shall carry out the decisions of the District Congress and District Council. The DEC shall:

- 20.1 Meet at least once a month.
- 20.2 Supervise the collection of subscriptions.
- 20.3 Submit reports to the PEC, the District Congress and District Council on the state of organisation and the finances of the District.
- 20.4 In consultation with the PEC, appoint a District organiser and staff where possible.
- 20.5 Organise, establish and service branches.
- 20.6 In co-ordination with the District Council:
 - 20.6.1 elaborate strategic, tactical and organisational tasks;
 - 20.6.2 ensure full participation of SACP branches in SACP activities and in the national democratic and socialist struggles;



- 20.6.3 initiate, co-ordinate and support campaigns at local level;
- 20.6.4 spearhead and support programmes for socialist education; and
- 20.6.5 develop working class leadership on the ground.

21. SUB-DISTRICTS

DECs may approve of the establishment of Sub-Districts in Districts that cover large geographical areas and have a minimum of 10 branches. The Sub-Districts shall comprise a minimum of 5 adjoining branches with a minimum of 500 members.

- 21.1 The CC, after consulting with the PECs, shall develop policy guidelines on the role and composition of Sub-District, which shall include the following:
 - 21.1.1 A Sub-District Council comprising representatives of at least 3 branches in proportion to their membership, shall elect a Sub-District Executive Committee.
 - 21.1.2 Only a person who has been in the SACP for more than 4 years as a member in good standing and has served in a SACP or YCLSA BEC for at least 2 years shall be eligible for election to the Sub-District Executive Committee.
 - 21.1.3 The Secretary and Chairperson of each branch within the Sub-District shall be ex-officio members of the Sub-District Executive Committee.
 - 21.1.4 The Secretary of each YCLSA branch in the Sub-District shall also be ex-officio members of the Sub-District Executive Committee.
 - 21.1.5 The Secretary and Chairperson of each Sub-District shall be ex-officio members of the DEC

22. BRANCHES

The basic structure of the SACP is the branch, to be formed at a residential area or workplace, and every member shall be obliged to belong to a branch. After consultation with the PECs, the CC shall draw up a policy framework for the determination of the boundaries of branches. This policy framework shall take into account the ward and voting district boundaries within a municipality. The branch shall:

- 22.1 Consist of a minimum of 25 members.
- 22.2 Ensure that its members are given every opportunity to exercise their basic democratic right to discuss and formulate policies.
- 22.3 Ensure that it acts as a basic unit of activity for members by:
 - 22.3.1 elaborating strategic, tactical and organisational tasks for the branch;
 - 22.3.2 fully participating in the national democratic and socialist struggles;
 - 22.3.3 initiating and co-ordinating campaigns;
 - 22.3.4 conducting programmes on socialist education; and
 - 22.3.5 developing working class leadership on the ground.
- 22.4 Assist members to fulfill their duties as defined in clause 5.9 above and interim members to meet the requirements for membership set out in 5.3 above.
- 22.5 Meet at least once a month.
- 22.6 Elect a BEC at (an annual branch meeting) (biennially) consisting of a Secretary, Chairperson,

Treasurer, Deputy Secretary and Deputy Chairperson and not more than 5 (8) additional committee members. [The BEC will elect an Internal Secretary for Organizing and Campaigns and Internal Secretary for Political Education and Ideological Development among its members.](#) Only a person who has been a member in good standing for more than 3 years shall be eligible for election to the BEC, except in the case of a totally new branch, in which case those who have been conferred membership by the DEC or PEC, having served a year as interim members, may stand for election to the BEC. The BEC shall submit regular reports to the DEC.

- 22.7 Where a vacancy arises among the office bearers of the branch, the next Branch General meeting shall elect an interim office bearer, who will serve for the remainder of the period until the next AGM.
- 22.8 Only send a voting delegate/s to a SACP Congress, Conference, or Council at National, Provincial, District or Sub-District levels, if that branch has been in existence and functioning for at least 6 months.

23. PARTY UNITS

- 23.1 Units of the SACP, consisting of a minimum of 4 members may be formed in circumstances where a branch cannot be formed. This unit shall be represented by one person on the nearest BEC. All the members of such a unit shall have all the responsibilities and duties of SACP members but do not have voting rights at Branch meetings or Sub-District or District or Provincial Councils and Congresses. Such units shall be allowed to exist and function for no more than one year without launching as a full branch, unless otherwise authorised by the DEC or PEC where a DEC does not exist or is not functional.
- 23.2 Units of the SACP consisting of a minimum of 4 members may also be formed in workplaces, with the approval of the DEC or PEC where a DEC does not exist or is not functional.
- 23.3 Units of the SACP consisting of a minimum of 4 members may also be formed to facilitate and encourage participation in SACP activities in a branch which covers a wide geographical area. The formation of such units within a branch must be approved at a branch general meeting.
- 23.4 Sectoral units of the SACP consisting of a minimum of 4 members may also be formed to advance SACP goals within different spheres of society. The formation and role of these units shall be determined by the CC or PEC, as appropriate.
- 23.5 Consistent with these provisions on Party units, the CC may provide guidelines on Party units.

24. QUORUMS

- 24.1 The launch of new branches, branch AGMs and branch general meetings: more than 50% of the members.
- 24.2 Units: more than 50% of the members.
- 22.3 District Congress, District Council, Sub-District Council: more than 50% of the branches.
- 24.4 Provincial Congress and Provincial Council: more than 50% of the branches.
- 24.5 National Congress: more than 50% of the branches.
- 24.6 BEC, Sub-District Executive, DEC, PEC, PWC, CC, PB: more than 50% of the elected members on each of these structures.
- 24.7 If after one hour, the relevant constitutional structure has not quorated, the meeting is regarded as non-quorate.



- 24.8 Meetings which do not quorate shall re-convene between 2 and 14 days later. Delegates present at the said meeting shall form a quorum.
- 24.9 Interim members do not constitute part of any quorum.

25. DISCIPLINE

- 25.1 (a) A member who is found guilty of a breach of any provision of this constitution or any other conduct detrimental to the SACP shall be subject to discipline by the SACP.
- (b) The CC may adopt a list of offences in terms of which a member may be charged for a breach of SACP discipline.
- 25.2 (a) Disciplinary proceedings shall normally be conducted at the level where the alleged violation or offence took place, namely the branch, district, province or national.
- (b) A BEC, DEC or PEC shall, where necessary, establish a disciplinary committee to hear disciplinary cases.
- (c) The CC shall appoint:
- (i) A Standing Disciplinary Committee of not less than 2 and not more than 5 persons to hear disciplinary cases.
 - (ii) A National Appeals Committee whose composition shall be members of the SACP who are not members of the CC to hear appeals.
- (d) The CC may direct that the disciplinary proceedings should be heard at a higher level than where the alleged violation took place.
- 25.3 (a) Any person facing disciplinary proceedings shall receive at least one week's notice of any hearing, as well as the basic allegations and charges against him or her and be afforded a reasonable opportunity to make his or her defence.
- (b) The disciplinary proceedings shall be completed within 90 days of the member receiving the notice of hearing.
- (c) No member shall be judged or disciplined without a proper hearing. This does not mean that sections 9.11 and 25.6 (c) may not be effected.
- (d) The CC shall draw up rules of procedure to be followed during a hearing process.
- 25.4 Refusal to participate in a disciplinary hearing or to accept the authority of the relevant SACP structure to impose disciplinary action shall constitute a serious offence, requiring immediate suspension for a period of at least 60 days. At the end of this period, the disciplinary hearing shall be restarted, and should the member repeat such refusal, the member shall be expelled from the SACP by the CC.
- 25.5 The case against a member facing disciplinary action shall proceed even if that member resigns or refuses to appear before the Standing Disciplinary Committee.
- 25.6 (a) Penalties for violations in terms of subsection 1 shall include a reprimand, payment of compensation, the performance of useful tasks, suspension or expulsion.
- (b) The penalties imposed by a branch or district disciplinary committee shall be immediately reported to the PEC for approval before they come into effect.
- (c) The PEC shall have the power to suspend members or impose lesser forms of punishment, which shall come into effect without prior approval of the CC, but such measure shall be

immediately reported to the CC, which has the power to amend or reverse them.

(d) Expulsion shall be imposed only by the CC acting either on its own initiative or after receiving a fully documented recommendation from a PEC.

(e) A suspended member shall not be allowed to attend meetings of any SACP structure during the period of suspension except by special invitation.

25.7 (a) Any person found guilty in a disciplinary proceeding shall have the right to appeal to the National Appeals Committee. All appeals shall be submitted through the Provincial Council concerned or in the case of a matter heard by the Standing Disciplinary Committee, through the CC, within 30 days of the person being notified of the decision. The Provincial Council or CC shall forward the appeal together with all other relevant documentation to the National Appeals Committee.

(b) The lodging of an appeal shall not postpone the operation of the penalty.

(c) Any member of the SACP whose appeal has been rejected by the National Appeals Committee shall have the right to appeal against such a decision in writing to the next Congress. The written appeal shall be submitted to the PB within 3 months of the date the member is informed of the National Appeals Committee's decision.

25.8 The CC-approved report on disciplinary taken against a SACP member shall be referred to the National Secretary of the YCLSA for the attention of the YCLSA National Committee if the SACP member is also a YCLSA member. The YCLSA shall take the same action against the member as the SACP.

25.9 The YCLSA National Committee-approved report on disciplinary action against a YCLSA member who is also a SACP member shall be referred to the SACP General Secretary. The General Secretary shall refer the report to the SACP Standing Disciplinary Committee for its recommendation to the CC on what action, if any, should be taken against the YCLSA member.

26. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

26.1 This constitution can be amended by a majority vote at National Congresses.

26.2 All proposed amendments to the constitution shall be submitted in writing to the CC not less than 2 months prior to a National Congress. The CC shall ensure that all provinces, districts and other structures receive such amendments or any other amendments proposed by the CC not less than 6 weeks prior to the National Congress and all comments received shall be tabled at the National Congress. Amendments that do not meet these deadlines shall be considered by a National Congress, provided a two-thirds majority of the delegates agree that they may be considered.



SACP 14th National Congress

Constitutional Committee

Proposed Constitutional Amendments

10-15 July 2017

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Most of the proposals here were considered at the 29-30 May 2016 PBC meeting and the CC meetings of June and August 2016 and the PB meeting of 12 May 2017.
- 1.2. We received proposals from the SACP Secretariat, North West, Mpumalanga, Free State and Western Cape. This report covers the proposed amendments and the decision taken at the May Party Building Commission and the June Central Committee meetings.

2. Constitutional Provisions on Constitutional Amendments

- 2.1. Section 26.2 of the Constitution: "All proposed amendments to the constitution shall be submitted in writing to the CC not less than 2 months prior to a National Congress. The CC shall ensure that all provinces, districts and other structures receive such amendments or any other amendments proposed by the CC not less than 6 weeks prior to the National Congress and all comments received shall be tabled at the National Congress. Amendments that do not meet these deadlines shall be considered by a National Congress, provided a two-thirds majority of the delegates agree that they may be considered."

3. Organisational Renewal and Review Commission Report to Provide Framework for Constitutional Amendments AFTER the 14th Congress

- 3.1. The Organisational Renewal and Review Commission Report will be discussed at the 14th National Congress and finalized. Decisions on the Report will entail constitutional amendments. Instead of making constitutional amendments at this 14th National Congress, which may have to be reviewed after the Organisational Renewal and Review Report is finalized, the May Party Building Commission meeting and the June Central Committee meeting decided it would be more productive to consider constitutional amendments holistically and in terms of a strategic framework, and therefore proposes to Congress that constitutional amendments be considered at a Special National Congress in 2018 after the 14th National Congress. In other words, constitutional amendments not be considered at the 14th Congress and be deferred to a Special National Congress in 2018.
- 3.2. If there are amendments that are absolutely urgent and need to be effected at the Congress they can be, , "provided a two-thirds majority of the delegates agree that they may be considered." (Section 26.2 of the Constitution).

4. Approach to Constitution

- 4.1. CONSTITUTION A GUIDE BUT NOT COMPREHENSIVE: For a variety of reasons, a Party Constitution should not be too comprehensive or long. It should not be substitute for addressing issues through policies, political education and action. Constitutional Amendments are only made at Congresses and Constitutions should not be changed lightly.
- 4.2. NEED FOR RULES AND GUIDELINES TO COMPLEMENT THE CONSTITUTION: This may be necessary to set out in detail such issues as the need for political education; induction of new members; a Code of Conduct; penalties for offenses and other matters.
- 4.3. DIFFERENCES WITH COMMUNIST PARTIES IN POWER: While there are many lessons to be drawn from the experiences of Communist Parties in government, especially in China and Cuba, we obviously cannot put into our Constitution some of the issues they have, as we do not have control of the state and because of the historical and other differences of our situation. But we should certainly draw from Constitutions of these parties whatever is relevant and useful to our experience.

5. Proposals on Amendments

- 5.1. NUMBER OF CC MEMBERS: Should the number of members elected to the CC be increased? If so, by how many and why?

- NW: "The number must be increased from current 35 by 9 additional members. The total number of CC additional members must be 44 then include 6* Officials, combined number of CC will be 50."

(* See 3.5.5.2 below: NW proposes 3 Deputy General Secretaries.)

WC: No

FS: Members of the CC must increase to 120 in view quantitative growth of the party. This will be the last Congress before 2021 Centenary and that there must be more members in the CC for deployment to provinces to assist with the build- up programmes towards centenary and beyond.

MP: That due to the nature of work that is faced by the Party in the country, all structures of the Party except Subdistricts and branches must be considered for an increase in the number of elected members - Central Committee must be 50 including officials

5.2. 3 DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARIES

- NW: As the Province we suggest that the original debate on three(3) Deputy General Secretaries be reconsidered. There was enough consultation towards the last National Congress sufficient consensus on "Two Additional DGS's.

In case there's consensus on Group membership, then the additional DGS shall be the national co-ordinator for group membership.

The only danger its when constitutional amendments are fixed on names of incumbents."

- 5.3. ALTERNATIVE EX-OFFICIO REPRESENTATIVES IN SACP STRUCTURES: If, for example, a Provincial Secretary or Chair is unavailable to attend a CC meeting, a Deputy Provincial Secretary (or some other appropriate Office-Bearer – or PWC member? Or PEC member?) or a Deputy Chair (or some other appropriate representative of the PEC?) should be allowed to attend CC meetings. The same situation should apply to PECs and other executive structures of the SACP.

- NW "There should be a constitutional amendment, the formulation should read as such, 'In the absence and with written apology of the Ex-officio member of any structure or level, the Deputy to that office will attend and in the case of office with more than one Deputies the option be of the first Deputy and only in the latters absence that the next Deputy should attend'".
- WC: No need for this.
- FS: Agree with proposal
- MP: That a clause can be included into the constitution for representation of ex-officios by only deputies. This must only happen through an application to the secretariat prior to the meeting and the acceptance of the application therefore.
- MP: That the Deputy Secretary and the Deputy Chairperson should be allowed to attend the CC, PEC and DEC meetings in the absence of both Secretary and Chairperson.

Please Note that there is no proposal to increase the Provincial or other SACP structures Deputy Secretaries to 3.

5.4. INCREASE PEC MEMBERS:

- MP: Increase PEC to 30, including officials

5.5. INCREASE DEC:

- MP: Increase to 25 including officials.

5.6. INCREASE NUMBERS OF DISTRICT, SUB-DISTRICT AND BRANCH EXECUTIVE STRUCTURES:

NW: "On the necessary focus of the SACP to strengthen the organizational capacity with the current financial constraints on appointments of additional staff, constitutional structures from District level to be structured to respond to organizational development needs as follows:

- The office bearers of the District be defined as: District Secretary, District Chairperson, District Treasurer, District Deputy Chairperson, District Deputy Secretary, Secretary for Organizing and campaigns, Secretary for Political Education and Ideological Development and a maximum of 15 additional members.
- The office bearers of the Sub-District be defined as: Sub-District Secretary, Sub-District Chairperson, Sub District Treasurer, Sub-District Deputy Chairperson, Sub-District Deputy Secretary, Secretary for Organizing and campaigns, Secretary for Political Education and Ideological Development, and a maximum of 10 additional members.
- The office bearers of the Branch be defined as: Branch Secretary, Branch Chairperson, Branch Treasurer, Secretary for Organizing and campaigns, Secretary for Political Education and Ideological Development and a maximum of 8 additional members."

WC: No

5.7. TERM OF OFFICE OF DISTRICT, SUB-DISTRICT AND BRANCH EXECUTIVE STRUCTURES: The term of office for District, Sub-District and Branch be constitutionally defined as follows:

- District: 3 years
- Sub-District: 2 years
- Branch: 2 years

WC: No

6. Wording of Amendments to the Constitution

- 6.1. Attached is a copy of the SACP Constitution with the amendments proposed in Section 7 above inserted in tracking.

7. Constitutional Committee

- 7.1. The Constitutional Committee comprises: Yunus Carrim (Chair), Ben Martins (Deputy Chair), Malesela Maleka (Secretary), Charles Setsubi, Mluleka Dlelanga, Zingiswa Losi, Bulelwa Thunyiswa, Reneva Fourie and Buti Manamela.
- 7.2. Cde Malesela, the Secretary, can be contacted at malesela.maleka@gmail.com.

8. Constitutional Commission

- 8.1. 2 representatives from each province and the YCL as well as the Constitutional Committee members make up the Constitutional Committee.
- 8.2. Provincial Secretaries and the YCL National Secretary are requested to submit the names of their representatives to Cde Malesela by 15 June.

9. Taking Issues Forward

- 9.1. We need in terms of the Constitutional requirement to get this document to the SACP structures at every level at least 6 weeks before the Congress. So this will have to be done as soon as possible.

Usually, the Constitutional Committee tables its initial report on amendments on the first day of the Congress, so that amendments can be finalized before the elections to the CC are held and/or some policy decisions might have to be taken



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